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EARLY CHURCHES IN SYRIA

PRINCETON MONOGRAPHS IN ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY

EARLY CHURCHES IN SYRIA

FOURTH TO SEVENTH CENTURIES

BY

HOWARD CROSBY BUTLER

Edited and Completed

BY

E. BALDWIN SMITH

PART ONE

History

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PREFACE

THE material used in the preparation of this volume is taken, in large part, from the "Publications of the American Archaeological Expedition to Syria in 1899—1900,"¹ published by the Century Company of New York and the Princeton University Press, and from the "Publications of the Princeton University Expeditions to Syria in 1904, 1905, and 1909,"² which were printed by the Late E. J. Brill at Leiden. The original inspiration of the above volumes, and the indirect inspiration of this book, were drawn from *La Syrie Centrale*, the monumental work of the late Marquis de Vogüé, the discoverer of the long lost architecture of Syria, whose volumes of plates, published in 1867, have contributed the basis of information for important references and illustrations, and even for whole chapters, in every historical study of Christian architecture that has been published for more than a generation. The field notes of the present writer, who was director of the American and Princeton Expeditions, furnish a certain amount of material which has never before found its way to publication. Not one of the great number of explorers who have visited Southern Syria, or one of the small number who have explored Northern Syria, before or since the day of M. de Vogüé, has published anything of real importance to the study of the churches with the exception of a few photographs. Only the observations of Professor Strzygowski upon the church at *Ḳaṣr Ibn Wardân*, and those based upon photographs taken by Baron von Oppenheim, have made noteworthy additions to our knowledge of the church architecture of this great country. No attempt has been made to include the churches of the Holy Land in this volume; they lie outside the scope of this work, and have little in common with trans-Jordan architecture.

No apology whatever is required for the work of M. de Vogüé. In the great mass of material published in his plates and text, only eighteen churches are described, six from Southern Syria, and twelve from Northern Syria, and these were examples taken from two somewhat restricted localities; but the deductions drawn by later writers from his presentations of this small number of examples have been often mistaken and misleading. It has been stated repeatedly, for instance, that the churches of Syria present little variety in their ground plans; and certain forms of churches appearing in M. de Vogüé's plates have been described as typical of Syrian architecture, while, as a matter of fact, they are almost unique. These misleading statements are accidents resulting from the observation of too small a body of documents drawn from a selected group of monuments. As the discoveries of M. de Vogüé are multiplied by more extended exploration, the

¹ Princeton University Press.

² Leiden, Brill.

buildings which he published remain among the most significant in all Syria. Now that two large tracts in Central Syria have been quite thoroughly examined, and a third has been added to our knowledge, though less completely explored, we are in possession of plans and measurements and photographs of a large body of monuments, over two hundred churches in all, from which generalizations safely may be made. The American Expedition set out to explore as great an area as possible; their publications were a general report on the monuments of the whole region and an attempt to classify the monuments geographically and chronologically. Even with the aid of a large body of monuments, the classifications of this publication, especially those based on chronology, and depending upon dated monuments, have been shown to be imperfect by more exhaustive explorations and by the discovery of more dated monuments. Then too, certain deductions drawn from the material in hand, e.g. deductions as to the employment of different schemes of proportion in buildings of different centuries, which seemed well founded, and were set forth in the publications, have been found to be less trustworthy in the light of more extensive knowledge. The aim of the Princeton expeditions was to take up important sites, and groups of less important sites, and to study them more in detail, in order to present a great body of monuments in measured plans and sections, in scale drawings of details, and, whenever possible, in restorations. In this work many entirely unknown buildings are published. A large number of the illustrations in the present volume are reproduced from the Princeton publications.

It is the purpose of the present book to extract from the great mass of material offered in the architectural parts of the several publications named above, the information relating to the subject of ecclesiastical architecture, and to arrange it, in condensed form, for the use of students and the public. For convenience, the volume is divided into two Parts, one historical, the other analytical. In the former, the origin, growth, and development of church architecture in Syria are traced, with preliminary observations upon geography, history, and the ancient inhabitants. In the latter, the architecture of the churches is discussed as a whole, without particular reference to chronology, and such subjects as construction, plans, superstructures, accessories and ornamental details are taken up separately.

In spite of the importance of its ancient monuments, little has been known, and consequently little has been written, about the desert and semi-desert parts of Syria in which a large majority of these monuments are to be found. It has been difficult for students and other readers to place geographically many of the localities in which are situated buildings that have been published and which are referred to, from time to time, in books on architectural subjects. For that reason, there follows a brief description of the country as it is today. After this will be found some historical notes that may be useful in accounting for the origin and the trend of the development of architecture, and, finally, a few observations are added in which an attempt has been made to

give a picture of the people, or peoples, who inhabited these regions and were the originators of these important native styles of building.

In the following chapters, the published references to all the buildings mentioned are given in foot notes for the use of readers who desire further information about any particular building. In these notes S.C. is used to denote La Syrie Centrale of M. de Vogüé. A. signifies the Publications of the American Expedition, and P. those of the Princeton Expeditions. An effort has been made to present all ground plans according to a single scale, the scale of .25 cm. = 1 m, or 4 metres to the centimeter. This has been applied to all the plans, except those of the larger monasteries, in which cases the scale is noted in the drawings, as either 1 or 2 millimetres to the metre.

HOWARD CROSBY BUTLER

Princeton University, 1921

FOREWORD

IN presenting this book to the public some explanation must be given for the length of time which has elapsed between the death of Howard Crosby Butler and its publication, and for his associate's part in the work.

Howard Butler, from the time when he returned from his first expedition, always intended to publish a history of church architecture in Syria. With this in mind, as early as 1911, he wrote the first draft of the analyses of this architecture, using the manuscript for ten years as the basis of his lectures in a graduate course on Syrian architecture. Every graduate student in the Department of Art and Archaeology at Princeton during those years will remember the lectures and the violet-inked manuscript to which he referred from time to time in his development of an Early Christian style of architecture in Syria.

As the years passed and he completed his official publication of the Princeton expeditions to Syria, he spoke frequently to the present writer of the necessity of rewriting and completing this study for publication, but by that time he was deeply immersed in Classical problems arising out of his excavations at Sardis. In 1921, however, the year before his final and fatal trip to Sardis, he undertook the rewriting. For this purpose he restudied the different churches, worked up more carefully the always baffling question of chronology, and wrote a detailed description and discussion of each church. Under the pressure of that last year he was not able to finish the work, and so, combining his old analysis of 1911 with his still unfinished description of the monuments, he sent the manuscript to his Holland printer to get a preliminary estimate of the cost of publication before completing the work on his return from Sardis.

At the time of his sudden death in Paris he was on his way to Holland to discuss the book with the printer and get the manuscript. It was at that moment, so unfortunate not only for the writing of this book, but also for all the other work which he had in hand, that delay began. Two years elapsed before his affairs in Princeton were roughly straightened out and the lost manuscript traced to Holland.

On the final return of the manuscript it seemed to be the duty and pleasure of the present writer to carry out his friend's desires and see that his book was published. He had studied with Professor Butler, helped him with his other books, and seemed the one best fitted to rework the old analysis as Howard Butler intended to do, filling up the gaps that had been left in the manuscript. In the meantime, however, European scholars and explorers had been working in the Syrian field, and the new material had to be incorporated into the unfinished book.

Here the delicacy of the responsibility of the present writer began. He wished to present in

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every respect the opinion and spirit of Howard Butler, and at the same time make the book as up-to-date as possible. Feeling that Howard Butler's ideas, even if they did not always agree with the most recent European theories, were valuable because of his experience and rare judgement, the present writer has tried to draw a very fine distinction in his rewriting and completion between the theories and ideas which Howard Butler would support, were he alive today, and those that he would question. Whole chapters, therefore, have been boldly rewritten, amplified or cut down, and perhaps changed in detail or form, but only when it was felt that every change and addition would receive his approval. In those cases where there seemed to be any doubt, any possible clash between the experienced Butler defending his statements against a difference of opinion, the changes have been brought down to the foot notes and the differences of opinion made evident. The work, then, has consisted of adding to the first part a description of new churches which have appeared in foreign publications and finishing a few which he had left half written; in the second part it has necessitated a very large rewriting and reworking along the lines that Howard Butler himself intended.

*Credit in the notes, I believe, has been given to the writings of the different European scholars whose works have helped to complete the book. Howard Butler in his own preface pays full credit to the Marquis de Vogüé for his initial work in the Syrian field. I myself do not need to mention my indebtedness to the writings of Dr. Josef Strzygowski, with whose theories I can not always agree, but for whose contribution to the field of Christian art there must always be admiration and indebtedness. H. Glück's *Der Breit-und-langhausbau in Syrien* (1916) has proved helpful in the completion of this book, as has H. W. Beyer's *Der Syrische Kirchenbau* (1925), a book based almost entirely upon the publications of Howard Butler.*

The greatest assistance in the preparation of the book came from the Princeton associates of Howard Butler, colleagues who were with him on his expeditions to Syria. Professor W. K. Prentice helped to rewrite the chapters which deal with the inscriptions and aided generously by reading parts of the proof and making valuable suggestions. Professor Eno Littmann, now of the Universities of Tübingen and Berlin, gave his assistance in the matter of Arabic and Syriac names, and with Professor David Magie helped when possible translations of the inscriptions required expert verification.

Hence in closing this difficult explanation the writer of this foreword asks the indulgence of all the friends and admirers of Howard Butler. The writer feels his responsibility, since through him must appear for the last time the mind and personality of his friend and teacher.

E. BALDWIN SMITH

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EARLY CHURCHES IN SYRIA

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CHAPTER I

SYRIA: THE MONUMENTS AND THE PEOPLE: 1. INTRODUCTORY SURVEY:
2. THE COUNTRY: 3. HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS: 4. THE PEOPLE

1. *INTRODUCTORY SURVEY*

IT has long been known that Syria, the birthplace of Christianity, preserves a great number of the more ancient buildings of the early Church, a greater number, perhaps, than has been preserved in any other part of the world. That this is due, in large measure, to the fact that Syria has not been a Christian country for nearly thirteen hundred years, will be generally conceded. The ancient buildings that were constructed for Christian worship in Rome, and other parts of Europe, have been so many times rebuilt, or at least altered and repaired, during succeeding centuries of the Church's growth, that it is difficult to determine, with certainty, what their original forms actually were, and to distinguish between the early work and the later additions. In Asia Minor, where the power of the Byzantine empire was continued well down into the Middle Ages, the most ancient forms of church building have been changed to a greater or less extent. In Egypt, most of the more ancient buildings have been subjected to alteration; in Northern Africa, little has been preserved without change; but in Syria and Arabia there are large districts where Christian communities thrived during the earliest Christian centuries, were deserted early in the seventh century, and have remained in the condition of a wilderness ever since.

It would not seem unnatural to look for the first examples of church architecture in the cradle-land of Christianity, and, indeed, the basilica at Bethlehem is one of the most important churches of the age of Constantine; but it is not to Judea, or to any part of Palestina, that we must look for the best preserved early churches; for Christian influence has never ceased to be in operation in these ancient abodes of Christianity, and the Holy Land has ever been thickly populated. But in the deserted mountain country to the east of Antioch, — the city in which the followers of Christ were first called Christians, and where the Church of the Apostolic Age made one of its earliest

homes —, in the great stretch of country that lies between the Orontes and the Syrian desert, and in the volcanic hills and barren wastes beyond Jordan, east of the mountains of Ammon and Gilead, there are still hundreds of churches of the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries, some of them in complete ruins, others partly destroyed, but many in so perfect a state of preservation that no conjecture is necessary for a detailed restoration of them to their original estate. So far as the direct evidence of inscriptions shows, there are no Christian monuments in these regions that are earlier than the Peace of the Church, though there may be both inscriptions and buildings of Christian origin here that antedate the reign of Constantine. But with the beginning of the fourth century Christianity appeared inconspicuously in the monuments, by the second quarter it seems to have been well established, and about the middle of the century it had expanded itself in large and imposing places of worship. The fifth century ushered in a great era of church building, in which new and rich elements of decoration appear; the sixth century combined these new forms of church architecture, elaborated old ones, and introduced fresh principles of enrichment that gave to the churches of Syria a place of distinction in the history of Christian architecture. One might almost say that a renaissance of the art of architecture was brought about by these Syrian architects of the fifth and sixth centuries, showing a remarkable degree of independence of any influence from the Capital of the Byzantine empire. This individual and vigorous style grew and progressed until abruptly cut off in the early years of the seventh century.

There was no era in the architectural history of the western, as opposed to the far-eastern, world, between the Roman period of the second century and the revival of the building art in northern Europe during the twelfth, that produced monuments of stone architecture comparable to those of Syria between the fourth and

the seventh centuries. Even the greater monuments of the Byzantine style, stripped of their coloured marbles and their mosaics, would stand only as wonderful achievements of engineering skill, with much grandeur of interior scale, but with no charm of exterior effect. The Syrian churches, while they may have boasted of mosaics and wall paintings, were not dependent, as the Byzantine churches were, upon these superficial adornments for beauty of effect, and, even in their ruins, present examples of careful composition and design, both exterior and interior, adorned with a wealth of purely architectural ornament, all wrought in a simple, truthful and beautiful use of natural building materials.

The church edifice, during the three centuries of its history in Syria, developed steadily from comparatively simple forms, through various stages of growth, to a structure quite elaborately articulated, producing various

forms of the basilical structure, and most interesting types of central buildings. One may only speculate as to the eventual outcome of this development, if the style of architecture initiated in these churches had been permitted a longer lease of life. One feels, however, in tracing the development of basilical plans, forms of interior supports, and the use of high arches, in one set of structures, and the evolution of the vault and dome in another set, that a coalescence of these various buildings principles soon must have taken place, which would have anticipated the architectural achievements of the Lombards and the Normans by at least five hundred years. One further surmises that the eventual result would have perpetuated more of the Greek and fewer of the Roman elements than are found in the architecture which we call Romanesque, for these Syrian monuments preserve much of Hellenistic spirit.

2. THE COUNTRY

A. SOUTHERN SYRIA: B. NORTHERN SYRIA: C. NORTHEASTERN SYRIA

THE country in which the majority of the churches discussed in these pages are situated is not the Syria ordinarily known to travellers, — Palestine, the Lebanon and the coast towns, — nor yet that part of the interior of Syria which still boasts of large cities, like Damascus and Aleppo, but consists of several regions in the interior which have become wholly, or in part, desert and practically uninhabited for centuries. These regions embrace a territory much larger than those sections of Syria which are still densely inhabited. Some of them, indeed, still remain to be thoroughly explored. There is every proof that they were once fertile, thickly populated and the seat of a highly developed civilization. Today they are either entirely deserted, — or perhaps sparsely inhabited during a few weeks at a time by nomads —, or occupied by small and scattered communities, in a very primitive state of civilization, which are making a last stand against the gradual drying up of the country. The ancient buildings in these regions are preserved exactly in reverse proportion to the number and condition of the inhabitants, unless some element of poor construction or of inferior materials is to be taken into consideration.

The principal regions in which our churches lie are three in number; each marked off from the others by distinct physical- geographical and geological lines, as well as by distinctions of their architectural monuments. All lie to the east of the great natural boundary

formed by the series of mountain ranges which parallel the coast, i.e. the Lebanon and Amanus ranges, and eastward again of the inner boundary line drawn by the Jordan which flows south, and the Orontes which flows north. It was owing to this exclusion of the western, coastal tracts of Syria that M. de Vögué, the discoverer of the architectural wonders of these regions, called the country "Syrie Centrale." The present discussions, however, include districts which lie too far to the east of the central strip for us to employ so restricted a nomenclature. One of our regions lies well to the south, another far to the north, the third lies to the east of the latter. In modern usage, the whole country, north and south, is known as Syria, and this has caused much confusion in the study of the art of the country. It is important to remember that the southern region was called Arabia in ancient times, and was inhabited for the most parts by Arabs, as it is today.

A. SOUTHERN SYRIA (*Provincia Arabia*)

To reach this region one must traverse the mountains of Palestine, cross the deep valley of Jordan, and then pass over the mountains of Ammon and Gilead. From the eastern base of those hills, now known as the Djebel Adjlûn and the Djaulân, the region extends northward to the fertile country around Damascus, eastward to the stony desert of il-Harrah, and southward, we know not how far, but well beyond the Wadi il-^cAkib, a



Ill. 1. General View in the Djebel Ḥaurân. Ruins of Ṭafhā.

tributary of the brook Jabbok of the Old Testament. This territory embraces the group of volcanic hills known the Djebel Ḥaurân, and the rolling country to the south of it, en-Nukra, and il-Ledjā, the great lava tract on the north. It coincides rather closely with ancient *Auranitis* and *Trachonitis*, and was mostly within the Roman *Provincia Arabia*.

The geological formation of the entire region is composed of black basalt, formed by the extinct volcanoes of the Djebel Ḥaurân. In the mountains and in the plain basalt was the only durable building material available. This hardest of building stone ever employed by man in large architectural undertakings had great influence in determining architectural forms. This region will be referred to in these chapters as Southern Syria Arabia, or, for brevity, as the South; sometimes as the Ḥaurân. This is now by far the most thickly settled of all the three districts; and for this reason it offers fewer examples of the churches except in its more deserted quarters. The Plain is one of the richest granaries of the Turkish Empire, and is inhabited by settled Arabs. Only bad government has reduced its flourishing towns, once the sites of many beautiful buildings, to wretched collections of huts among which the broken ruins of sumptuous edifices are still to be seen. Scarcely a remnant of church architecture remains here. The mountains and part of the Ledjā have been occupied for a century or less by the Druses, a people in constant rebellion and practically independent, who subsist on the remains of ancient fertility in sequestered

valleys, and have destroyed a great part of the ancient structures in their own unskilled, but rather extensive, building operations. The rolling tract to the south is less and less thickly settled as one proceeds to the southward, until finally he finds himself in the midst of a large group of ancient towns (Ill. 1.) in a territory that has long been a desert, inhabited by wandering tribes of Bedawin. Here, and in the Ledjā, parts of which are deserted, were found the majority of the buildings which serve to illustrate the church architecture of Arabia.

B. NORTHERN SYRIA (*Syria Magna*)

The second region of importance in our study of the Syrian churches is situated far to the north, at the other extremity of Syria³). Its western boundary lies near to the sea; and to reach it one has only to cross the coast range of the Amanus and the valley of the Orontes. Beginning at a point a little to the north of Ḥamā, ancient *Epiphania*, this region extends northward nearly as far as the Nahr ʿAfrin, — the river which flows westward into the Lake of Antioch, — and to the northeast almost to Aleppo. Its eastern boundary is marked by the line of the ancient and modern Aleppo-Damascus road. This is entirely a rugged mountain country, embracing four groups of hills; the Djebel Riḥa in the south, and the Djebel il-Aʿla, Djebel Bārishā, Djebel Ḥalaḳah, and Djebel Simʿān, extending one beyond the other from southwest to northeast. These hills are composed wholly of limestone

³ The intervening country between this region and Southern Syria, the country about Damascus and to the north of that city, is quite thickly settled, and consequently contains few remains of ancient churches.

of a beautiful texture and quality. No better stone for building purposes had ever been hewn.

This region, which, in these chapters, will be known as Northern Syria, or simply the North, has few inhabitants, and these are confined to a small number of villages that have been erected among the ruins of ancient towns. There is ample evidence, however, to prove that these barren wasted hills, now almost completely denuded of earth and vegetation, were once covered with thin, but productive soil and supported by a large and prosperous population. A vast majority of the ancient sites are entirely deserted, and have been in this condition for thirteen centuries. The greater number of the small population are Arabic-speaking shepherds. In the Djebel il-A'la there are a few impoverished communities of Druses; in the middle part of the region, and in the hills to the northeast, one finds occasional settlements of Turkmans and Kurds, living for the most part in tents. The settlers in these limestone hills are very poor and without ambition, and have wrought little change in the condition of the ancient towns, except in a few cases in which larger villages have grown up in the vicinity of fertile valleys. In these cases the neighbouring ruins have been pillaged for building materials; but ordinarily the ancient architecture has suffered only from natural causes, especially from earthquakes.

C. NORTHEASTERN SYRIA (*Chalcidene and Euphratensis*)

The third region is larger than either of the others, and has been less thoroughly explored. It occupies the eastern part of Northern Syria, and is to be regarded separately from the other northern region on geographical and geological, as well as architectural grounds. It is, so far as it is known, a gently rolling country, mostly desert. Its western boundary is the eastern foot of the limestone hills described above, or the line of the Aleppo-Damascus highway. It extends northward almost to Aleppo, eastward to the Euphrates, which, at this part of its course, flows in a general direction of southeast-by-east, and southward into the unexplored region above Palmyra, part of which may always have been a desert. The western part of this rolling country is underlaid with black basalt. This formation is known to exist upon a line drawn eastward

from Homs, ancient *Emessa*, and to extend unbroken directly northward from that line to include the Djebel Ḥaṣṣ and the Djebel Shbêt, two low-lying groups of hills to the southeast of Aleppo. Somewhere to the east this deposit of basalt comes to an end; for at Isriyeh, a little to the southeast of the Djebel Shbêt, and at Reṣâfah not far from the Euphrates, limestone, or gypsum, takes its place, and in the hills to the north of Palmyra, as well as at Palmyra itself, the natural rock is limestone of that marblelike quality which lends so much to the beauty of the architecture of Zenobia's capital. In those parts of the country in which basalt is the underlying rock, it was the only durable building material to be had. But the basalt was not easily quarried, being deep under ground, and recourse was often had to the use of sun-dried brick. It will be found that some of the churches of this region were constructed in large part of mud-bricks, and that this produced a distinct inferiority in the architecture.

This third region embraces ancient *Chalcidene* and a part, at least, of *Euphratensis*. In these pages it will be known as Northeastern Syria, or the East, or as the basalt region of the North. Its inhabitants are few. Within easy reach of the great highway on the west there is a small number of squalid villages occupied by miserably poor settled Arabs, some of whom are said to be outlaws from the larger towns on the course of the highway. One small section, a plateau east of Ḥamā, called il-ʿAlā, still boasts a scant fertility, and seems to have been well settled during the Middle Ages, and is still occupied by a wretched peasantry. But all the rest of the country to the north and east is absolutely deserted, and very few even of the wandering Bedawin ever reach this desolate land. The country has not been denuded of soil, as has been the case of the limestone hills to the west; there is no lack of soil, but the lack of rain and the absence of means of irrigation, have brought the region to its present state. The earth seems dead and able to support only desert grass and mosses. If it were not for the existence of a few widely scattered wells, all of which are of great depth, it would be impossible to explore this wasted tract between the limestone hills and the desert-lined Euphrates.

3. HISTORICAL AND RACIAL CONSIDERATIONS

IT is unnecessary, for our present purpose, to consider in detail the early history of those parts of Syria with which we are particularly concerned. The early history of the Phoenicians, the

Jews, the Hittites, and of other peoples who inhabited Syria at one time or another, and the early invasions of Egyptians, Assyrians, and Persians, may be looked upon as having had only a very distant relation to



Ill. 2. General view in the Djebel Bārîshā. Ruins of Dauwâr.



Ill. 3. General view in the Djebel Sim'ân. Ruins of Simkhâr.

the development of the architecture of the Christian period. The one factor in all these early, as in the later, stages of Syria's history, which is important for our study of the churches, is the racial solidarity. However divided politically, however opposed to one another in matters of religion, however exclusive in nationality, and however separated linguistically, the peoples of Syria may have been, one must remember that they were racially one, belonging to the general Semitic stock which had peopled Syria and Arabia ever since the dawn of civilization. This fact, as we shall see, had a fundamental influence upon the development of Christian architecture.

It was not until the end of the fourth century before Christ, — a rather late date in Syrian history, — that a powerful and significant foreign influence was intruded into Syrian civilization. With the conquests of Alexander the Great, and with the establishment of one strong Greek kingdom in Syria and another to the south of it, in Egypt, a new and vigorous foreign element was introduced into the life of the various Syrian peoples, which had a most profound influence, not only upon their political, social and religious institutions, but upon their culture, language and art. In spite of the fact that several small Semitic nations still maintained independent kingdoms of longer or shorter duration, such as that of the Arabic Nabataeans in the South, and that of the Jewish Maccabees and the Idumeans in Palestine, the power of the great Hellenistic kingdom of Syria, with its capital at Antioch, was felt in increasing force from one end of Syria to the other in all things which pertained to culture. It will probably never be known what proportion of the population of Syria at any given time was of purely European blood, as the result of colonization and of the settling of Macedonian armies upon the soil of Asia. It is probable that the blood of the country was soon very much mixed. But the influence of the foreign admixture was almost at once amazingly apparent in the written language, in the religion and in the art of the peoples of Syria.

For the actual centres of this Hellenistic influence we naturally look first to the city of Antioch in the North, second to the Greek cities which grew up along the coast, and thirdly to the Decapolis, that group of Hellenistic cities which came into being in the South, apparently as the result of a conscious effort to Hellenize that part of the country which was still attempting to maintain its Semitism and independence. Antioch, a new foundation, was a purely Hellenistic city, established in the midst of a country inhabited by Arameans who spoke Syriac, or some other form of Aramaic, but who had no national

organization of their own, and therefore took the more readily and kindly to Hellenistic control. The coastal cities were many of them independent, leagued either with the Hellenistic kingdom of Syria or that of Egypt. In the south, the Jewish and Nabataean kingdoms, while feebly resisting the encroachments of the Hellenistic powers, and preserving their peculiar forms of Semitic religion and speech, were slowly yielding to the influence of Hellenistic culture. The architecture of the Nabataeans is an illustration of this point; for while it preserves many elements that are indigenous, it shows others that were manifestly taken over from the art of their Greek neighbours. The architecture of the Jewish Maccabean rulers, so far as it has been preserved, also shows the influence of western art.

When the power of the Hellenistic kingdom of Syria had begun to decline, and the Semitic kingdoms of the South had begun once more to reassert their strength, and a Semitic kingdom had established itself in the North, beyond the Euphrates in the region of Edessa, a new power appeared from the West which was eventually to unify the peoples of Syria as they had never been unified politically in all their history. This was the world conquering power of Rome. The process was a long one, covering the better part of two centuries; but its effects were to endure for five centuries afterward. The process began with Pompey's conquest in the North in 63 B.C. and the conversion of the kingdom of Syria into a Roman province; it was continued by the interference of Rome in the affairs of the Idumean kingdom, early in the first century after Christ, by the final conquest of the Jews in 70 A.D., by the subsequent victory over the Nabataeans, and by the formation of the province of Arabia, under the emperor Trajan, in 106 A.D. From this time forth all Syria was ruled from Rome.

During the Hellenistic and the early Roman periods there had grown up in Syria a number of important cities which were the outposts of Western culture in this part of the world. Among the cities of the South which were to have a significant influence upon the architecture of a later period, were *Bostra*, the capital of the province of Arabia, *Philadelphia*, now 'Ammân. *Gerasa*, now Djerash, *Kanatha*, now ẖanawât and once a member like *Philadelphia* and *Gerasa* of the Decapolis, *Saccae*, another city in the mountains, and *Aere*, a large town in the plain of the Ḥaurân, all these situated south of Damascus. In the North were *Antiochia*, the head and centre of Hellenistic culture in Syria; farther down the valley of the Orontes were *Apamea*, *Larissa*, *Epiphania* and *Emessa*; and in the Northeast *Chalcis*, *Beroea* and *Hierapolis*.

It was first remarked by M. de Vogüé, and has been reiterated by every student of Syrian civilization after him, that the policy of Rome in Syria was not to Romanize, but to Hellenize, i.e. to extend Hellenistic culture. After the complete domination of Rome had been established during the second and third centuries, Rome's policy of unification was carried on. Four classes of monuments remain as memorials of her power of organization and unification, — the roads, the bridges, the milestones, and the coins. The inscriptions upon these monuments placed constant reminders of Rome and ever present examples of the Latin tongue before the eyes and in the hands of the inhabitants. These were distinctly Roman. But in almost all other matters, such as the affairs of religion, of language and of art, Rome's influence was employed to extend and perfect the growth of Hellenistic culture already established. With all the powers of unification at her disposal, Rome made no attempt to unify the art of the various provinces of Syria and Arabia. This is well illustrated in the monuments of architecture. If the temples in these provinces, erected during the period of Rome's greatest power, had been built under the influence of Roman art, we should find in them a similarity of architectural forms. But, as a matter of fact, not even the deities honored by the temples are the same in the different regions, and the temples themselves are as unlike in structure, and in ornamental details, as if they had been erected at opposite ends of the Roman world. The temples and other buildings of the period in the South represent a complete break with Classical precedent; the Semitic builders treated Classical forms in their own way, altered constructional details to suit their own notions of building, and infused the ornament with rich Oriental feeling. The temples of the same period in the North, on the other hand, being nearer to the fountain-head of Classical teaching in Syria, are simple and almost severe in their adherence to Classical forms. The earlier architects of these two localities had imbibed Hellenistic culture in different ways, and had assimilated it with different conceptions. Under Roman political dominion, the tendency was for the architectural styles of the different provinces to grow farther apart rather than to come together.

When the strength of Rome beside the Tiber had begun to decline, her administrating force, and her power of unification in Syria had hardly shown a sign of relaxation before the corresponding influences of New Rome, beside the Bosphorus, began to hold the provinces in unified control. But another force, a still greater force for unification, had long been at work in Syria; not one coming from foreign lands, but one sprung out of her own soil. Simultaneously with the transfer

Early Churches in Syria.

of the central seat of power from Rome to Constantinople, the Christian religion was set free throughout the Roman world. The effect of the edict of Constantine upon Syria was electric. The response to it was instantaneous, and a reaction immediately set in which brought to life every native impulse in the long half-dormant Semitic soul. The architecture which sprang up at the call of the new religion is an index of the readiness with which these Oriental peoples accepted this new faith of Oriental origin. The most distant parts of Syria were now bound together, not only by political ties which had been forced upon them, but also by a religious faith which had arisen among their own people. Even such unifying processes as those represented by allegiance to common rulers, the use of a common tongue, and faith in a common creed, were powerless to unify the architecture of Syria. The churches of Syria, from first to last, are to be classified according to geographical, I might almost say national, distinctions, the "Christian Arabic" architecture of the South being as distinct from the "Christian Syriac" architecture of the North as either is from the Christian architecture of Egypt, Greece or Italy.

In the fourth century a group of cities of secondary importance grew up in Syria and Arabia, in addition to the large towns and cities either of earlier Hellenistic and ancient Syrian origin or those which had become prominent during the period of Roman rule. A number of these became the seats of bishops, and are mentioned in the lists of cities represented at the early councils of the Church. In the South we have Umm-idj-Djimâl which was perhaps *Thantia* of the Roman period and Beth Gamul of the Old Testament; in the North, Brâd which was perhaps ancient *Barada*, and *Shansharah*, il-Bârah and Ruwêhâ and in the Northeast, a considerable number of still larger cities, like *Androna* now il-Anderîn, *Tarutia* now Kerrâtîn, *Salaminiyas* now Selemîyeh, Khanâşîr which was perhaps *Neo-Caesarea*, and Reşâfah, the ancient *Sergiopolis*. It may have been that the flatter country was productive of grain, and, hence, better able to support large, concentrated populations.

After the establishment of Christianity as the state religion, the Christian history of Syria had but three centuries to run. These three hundred years were prolific of monuments which bespeak development and growth; for during the fourth and fifth centuries, while Italy and Greece were being overrun by Goths and Vandals, and while both of those countries were productive of little of architectural importance, Syria was enjoying peace and prosperity, and producing churches, public buildings, private villas and tombs of real dignity and beauty. The curve of architectural

Early Churches in Syria

evolution was still in an upward course when the sudden end came. The architecture of the closing decades of the sixth century, and of the opening years of the seventh, gives no sign that the Christian civilization of Syria had entered upon a period of decline and decay. Whatever may have been the state of affairs at the seat of government, it seems, from a study of the monuments of Syria, as if Syrian civilization had just come into its own, and was pressing forward to

higher and higher attainments when it was cut off. The country had long since lost the power to defend itself, and, as soon as the military protection of the Empire failed her, Syria became an easy prey, first to the Persians in 610—12, and, soon after, (633—638), to the Arab adherents of another indigenous religion—the religion of Islam. From this time much of Syria has been deserted.

4. THE PEOPLE

SOMETHING has been said already with regard to the racial origins of the peoples of Syria, and the mixture of races that resulted from the settlement of Greeks and Macedonians in the country after the conquests of Alexander. The inhabitants were of Aramean, Semitic stock with an admixture, here and there, of Greek blood. Many localities doubtless were peopled exclusively by Semites; a few perhaps were occupied by inhabitants of nearly pure Greek origin. Too much reliance is sometimes placed upon personal names as indices of race; but they may perhaps be considered as straws showing how the racial winds were blowing. We find in the inscriptions of the North that names like Antiochos, Seleukos and Dionysos are quite as numerous as purely Oriental names like Barechbelos and Abedrapsas. In the South, Alexandros and Herakleitos are almost as common as the plainly Arabic Walos, Abibos and Zabdanos. We also often find that fathers with Greek names had sons with Semitic names, and *vice versa*, and among sons of the same father such a mixture of names as Gennealis, Romanos, Bizos, Panphilos and Dionysis. In the South, people probably spoke some form of Arabic, in the North, Syriac; but the language of the imperial administration, of religion, and probably of commerce, was Greek in both regions; and Greek was almost the only written tongue after the second century, Syriac coming into the inscriptions of the North rather late, as a sort of reaction, in connexion with the establishment of a national church.

It would be rather difficult to discuss the character of the populations of the larger cities, their status, occupations, education, taste etc., for the reason that we have so little remaining of the things which they created. But from a study of the domestic, civil and funerary architecture, the sculpture, mosaics and inscriptions, and the small utensils found in tombs, we may derive much information about the people who

made and used these objects. I have devoted more space to this subject in a former publication⁴; here it will suffice to sum up by saying that the tangible remains of their civilization indicate that the people who inhabited the greater number of these smaller towns in Northern and Southern Syria composed a large, well-to-do middle class. They seem to have had no superiors living near them, for there is only one residence of special magnificence in Northern Syria, and one in the South, and these may have been the houses of the local governors, and there are no remains to suggest the existence of an inferior class; but such there must have been, a class of slaves, so simple that it left no remains whatever. There are thousands of residences, well planned, commodious and often richly decorated, with two or more storeys, large rooms and small, shady porticoes, balconies, handsome entrances, and detached or attached stables. The degrees of luxury exhibited in these houses are almost negligible; for all suggest comfort and cleanliness, and all manifest good taste. The inhabitants of these houses, moreover, had enough and to spare. Some of them like Julianos of Serdjillā and Thomas of Androna, built baths for public utility, while others founded churches or convents. Those who could not afford these larger gifts to the public, or to the Church, presented ornamental gateways or doors, or other significant details. The tombs which they erected for themselves and their families compose the most considerable and most notable group of ancient funeral structures known. They were not large land holders, these Christian Syrians, for the towns are too near together to have permitted of this, and for the same reason they could not have been growers of grain on a large scale, or owners of large herds. There are remains of industry in large numbers of wine and olive presses, with inscriptions which have to do with industries. There are towns made up largely of bazaars, indicating that many of the inhabitants

⁴ P. II B. p. 108

were merchants, and it is probable that an extensive commerce was carried on with the great centres of trade in the East and the West. In Southern Syria the caravans from farther Arabia, from Mesopotamia and India, undoubtedly created a large class of merchants and traders. With the triumph of Christianity a wave of enthusiasm for the new faith swept over the people, many of whom had undoubtedly been

practicing the cult in secret for generations. Churches, chapels, monasteries, and convents, sprang up in all directions, over the length and breadth of the land, and, within two hundred years, every one of the smallest communities possessed a house of Christian worship; while some towns of no great size could boast of three or four churches.

CHAPTER II

CHURCHES OF THE FOURTH CENTURY: 1. INTRODUCTION: 2. ARCHITECTURAL ANTECEDENTS:
3. CHURCHES OF SOUTHERN SYRIA: 4. CHURCHES OF NORTHERN SYRIA:
5. CHURCHES OF NORTHEASTERN SYRIA

1. INTRODUCTION

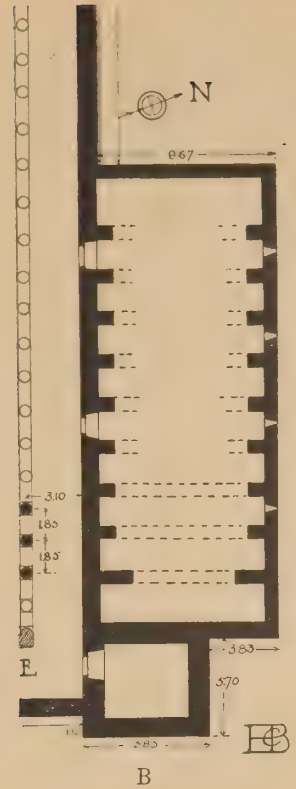
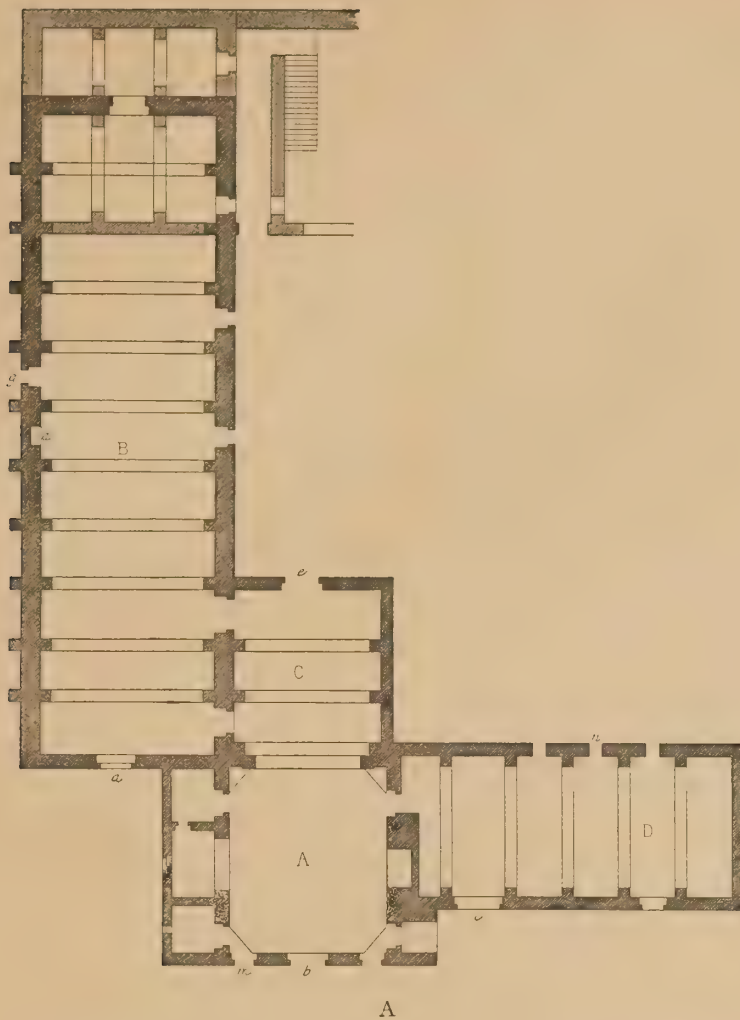
THE triumph of Christianity made a decided break in the continuity of the architecture of Syria as it did in the architectural continuity of every other part of the Roman world. It is very certain that the new religion had had many adherents in Syria for several generations. Even in the Apostolic Age the followers of Christ in the city of Antioch were called Christians. St. Paul had preached in Damascus, and perhaps had won converts to the faith during his sojourn in Arabia. The Decapolis had known the teachings of the new creed from the time of their original promulgation; and it is unthinkable that the seeds sown in this primitive period of the Church's history had not been in a continuous state of growth, and had not continued to produce fruit, in spite of periods of persecution, when we consider the abundant and widespread enthusiasm with which the "Peace of the Church" was hailed. It is as difficult to determine the type and character of the places of worship used by the Christians, before the time of Constantine, in Syria, as it is in other parts of the world. No traces of such places have been found, and no references to them are forthcoming. Coincident with the visit of the Empress Helena to Jerusalem and the sacred places of the Holy Land, there grew up churches of great magnificence to mark each hallowed spot, like the place of the Annunciation at Nazareth, the place of the Nativity at Bethlehem, the Holy Sepulchre and the Mount of Olives at Jerusalem. Later Constantine laid the foundation of a great church at Antioch. We know most of these churches only from unsatisfactory references to them in the texts. Only one of them, the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, preserves any part of its original structure. It is probable

that all of these churches, founded under imperial patronage, were foreign to the architecture of the land and were carried out on the lines of the great structures which Constantine and his family erected at Rome and in Constantinople. They may have had a remote influence upon the early churches of Syria; but the earliest buildings erected for Christian worship by the natives of the interior were very different from them in plan, construction and ornamental details. We must, therefore, look to buildings of native production for the inspiration of these early architects. Such buildings would be necessarily of Pagan origin, and some of them might have been edifices which had been used by the Christians at times when the persecutions were relaxed. There is the old tradition that the emperor Philippus Arabs, in the middle of the third century, was secretly a Christian, and also the story of that emperor's coming into a little church and taking his place on the penitents' bench. These accounts may be purely legendary, but one has to remember that at about this time (244 A.D.) the Church Father Origen debated with Bishop Beryllus of *Bostra*, at the Council of *Bostra*, which was certainly a public gathering, and probably held in a public building. In any event, persecutions were renewed after Philip's death by his successor Trajan Decius. Antioch was a city much favoured by the emperors, especially the emperors of the Syrian line, immediately before Philip, — Caracalla, Elagabalus, Alexander Severus, and their imperial relatives, some of whom are known to have looked, not without favour, upon the Christian religion; so that the first half of the third century had been comparatively safe for the Christians.

2. ARCHITECTURAL ANTECEDENTS

THERE are four types of buildings belonging to the Pagan period in Syria that played important roles in determining the forms of the early churches of the country. Three of them are

civil, and one religious. They differ widely among themselves in form; and hence we find four different forms of Christian churches. Not one of these Pagan buildings is situated in Northern Syria, where, indeed,



Ill. 4. A. *Shakḱā*. "Kaisariyeh (after de Vogüé).
B. *Dêr Smêdj*. Paḡan Building.

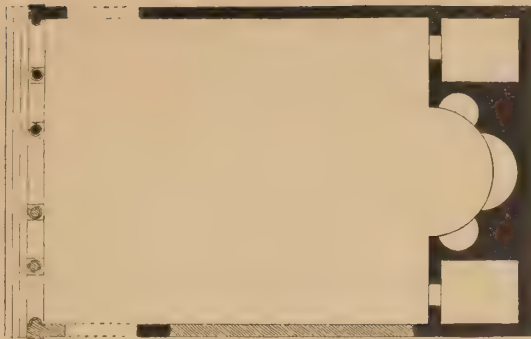
few buildings of the Pagan period have survived, and not one of them has the form which we ordinarily recognize as that of the basilica. The simplest of these buildings is very well represented in the well-preserved "Kaisariyeh" at Shaḡḡā,⁵ discovered by M. de Vogüé, a building certainly not later than the third century, and perhaps belonging to the second. The important part of this building for our present study is the oblong hall, lying east and west, on the south side of the building (*III.* 4 A). This hall was originally divided into eleven bays by ten transverse arches supported by pilaster piers ranged against the walls, and reinforced by exterior wall buttresses, — the earliest examples of this kind of construction in Syria. The bays at the two extremities are slightly deeper than the others. The transverse arches were built up in the spandrels to a level wall just above the crowns of the arches, and the whole structure was roofed by flat slabs of stone laid from one arch

wall to the next. There were small doorways in the side walls, and a large rectangular window with a small circular window above it, in the east wall. The ornamental details of this building, consisting of the moulded caps of the pilaster piers, an interior niche on the south side, and the adornments of the east windows, are typical of the best work of the Roman period. The construction throughout is perfect. This building appears to have been converted into a church at an early period, perhaps immediately after the promulgation of Constantine's decree. The deep east bay became the sanctuary, the elaborate carving of the lintel of the east window was chiselled away, and three crosses in relief were substituted. Another example of this type is a Pagan building in the temenos of Dêr-Smêdj ⁶ (*Ill.* 4 B).

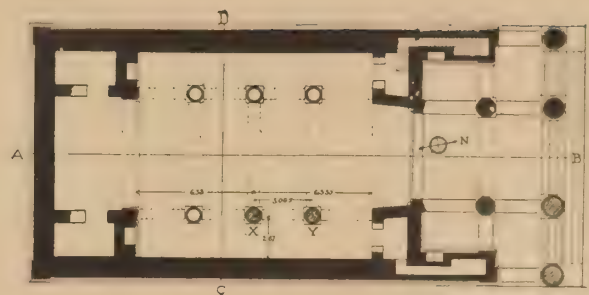
The second type of Pagan structure among those which had a direct influence upon the churches of Syria, is exemplified in a well-preserved building in

⁵ S. C. Pl. 8

⁶ *P.* II, A. p. 352, *Ill.* 317.



A



B

Ill. 7. A. *Ḳanawât. Serâyâ, plan.*B. *Ḳanawât. Temple of Zeus, plan.*

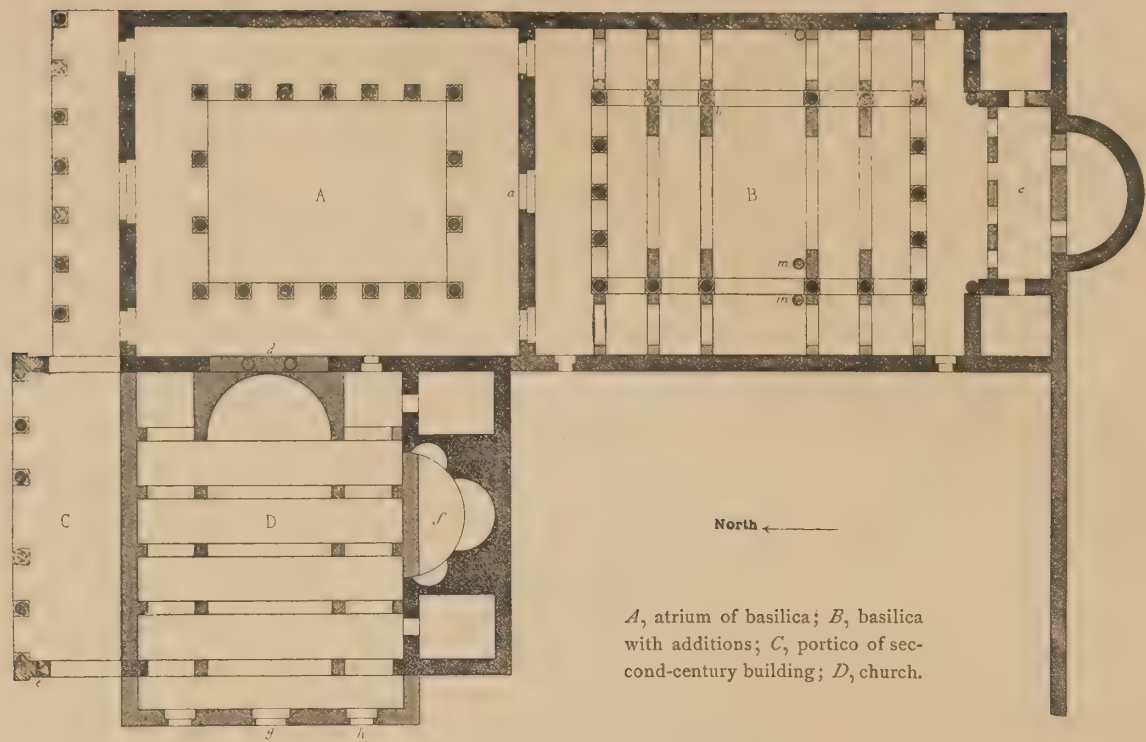
Four free standing columns in the interior, against the south wall, carry an entablature over the openings to the side chambers, and an arcuated entablature over the apse which is covered with a huge *concha*. Columns engaged with the side walls carry extensions of the entablature. There was apparently a tetrastyle porch in front of the temple, and this, and the apse with its side chambers, were both covered with gable roofs. The rest of the interior was probably open to the sky, unless wooden beams of very exceptional length were employed; for there were certainly no interior columns. In the Middle Ages the interior was spanned by a crude transverse arch, the whole was then roofed with slabs of stone, and was converted into a mosque. There are other buildings in Southern Syria of this general type, i.e. with a threefold division of the end opposite to the entrance, viz. the temple⁹ at Slêm, ancient *Selaema* (Ill. 6 B), in which there were an apse and side chambers, and which was probably entirely roofed over, and two, possibly three, temples at *Ḳanawât*, ancient *Kanatha*. The first of these two temples¹⁰ now forms a part of a large complex of ancient buildings known as the "Serâyâ." It is a prostyle building (Ill. 7 A) facing north. Its south end is composed of a broad semicircular apsis between two rectangular side chambers. The apsis has one large and two small semicircular niches opening out from it, giving it a tri-lobed plan known to the ancients as *triconchos sigma*. In the second temple, which was the Temple of Zeus,¹¹ the apse is replaced by a rectangular arched recess (Ill. 7 B) between narrow side chambers, which have doorways opening upon the recess. This last temple is further important for the reason that the naos was divided into three aisles by two rows of columns, a very unusual disposition of the interior in the temples of the Roman period, and the only example of a Pagan building in Syria which suggests the ordinary basilical plan, but this suggestion

need not be pressed here because there was no clearstorey in the usual sense. The arrangement, however is significant for the origin of those three-aisled Arabian churches which had no clearstorey. It is possible that a third temple in *Ḳanawât*, the Temple of Helios, also terminated in an apsis, for a huge broken *concha* was found in its ruins. The "Praetorium" at Mismîyeh, which was for many years the only known example of a Pagan building having an apse and side chambers, has perished entirely. There is one more building which perhaps should be included under this list of Pagan prototypes. It is found in the complex of buildings at *Ḳanawât* including the temple with the tri-lobed apse between side chambers. It is completely ruined today, and it is very difficult to make out the plan, and to distinguish the earlier from the later constructions; for at least two periods are represented. The drawing published by M. de Vogüé (Ill. 8) plainly shows two periods by different degrees of shading. It will be noticed in the plan that the darker parts of the oblong apsidal building to the right, which is oriented north and south, show a protruding apse, square chambers in the angles of the nave flanking the opening to the apse, two longitudinal rows of six columns each and two transverse rows of three each connecting the ends of the longitudinal rows, all the columns forming a rectangle within the outer walls; the middle intercolumniation on either side is twice as wide as the other spaces. The more lightly shaded parts show a wall with three windows closing the apse arch, another wall with five windows connecting the side chambers, heavy oblong piers encasing the longitudinal columns, and wall piers in the side walls. These latter piers are represented as the supports of transverse arches, and broad longitudinal arches span the wide intercolumniations on either side. This building opens in front, that is, to the north, by three doorways upon a colonnaded atrium which also has three openings

⁹ P. II. A. pp. 316—321, Ill. 320.

¹⁰ A. II, A. pp. 357—360.

¹¹ P. II, A. pp. 347—350, Ill. 315.

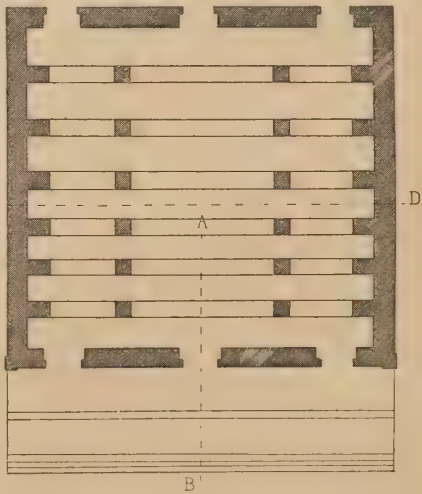


Ill. 8. *Kanawât. Serâyâ, plan.*

in its front wall and a hexastyle porch outside. This atrium is exceptionally well-preserved. Its interior columns are those often referred to as "Sabaean" in reviews of M. de Vogüé's work. They are the only examples of their kind in Syria. The interior columns are shown as of the same type. The middle entrance to the basilica is a Classical portal of unusual beauty, taken from some older building; the three windows on the west side of the atrium are separated by columns composed of fragments from an older structure, and the columns of the outer porch are Corinthian columns of a good early period. The whole structure, from end to end, is a patchwork. If it could be shown that it was of Christian origin, it would be of great importance for the history of architecture in Arabia; but I believe that it belongs to the third century, and was a civil building of some sort. Every Christian church that has been discovered in Syria, thus far, is oriented east and west¹²; this building has its apse toward the south. The later alterations may have been made by Christians; but probably not for church purposes; for the apse was closed at that time and no other was added. The building in its present state is at best problematical, and probably of little importance for the history of church architecture.

The fourth type of building, a more complex type, is illustrated by the so-called Basilica, situated at Shaḡḡā and first published by M. de Vogüé.¹³ This

building is not later than the beginning of the third century. Its only claim to the name of basilica is the three-fold division of its interior. Here we have one broad and two narrow side aisles, (Ill. 9) separated by square piers. But these piers, instead of carrying a system of longitudinal arches, like those of an ordinary basilica, carry an elaborate system of transverse arches, broad, high arches above the middle aisle, and narrow arches in two storeys over the side aisles, resting on salient pier pilasters in the side walls. The crowns of the arches of the upper storey are brought up to the level of the crown of the high arches, the spandrels



Ill. 9. *Shaḡḡā. Basilica, plan.*

¹² Cf. p. 182, n. 327.

¹³ S. C. Pl. 15.



Ill. 10. *Shaqqā. Basilica. Section.*

are built up to a straight line, and the whole was covered with flat slabs of stone (Ill. 10). The piers are joined to each other by narrow longitudinal arches which assist in the support of the galleries provided by the upper storey of the side arches. This building was almost square. There were three doorways in either end. There is no evidence that it was ever converted for Christian service.

It requires but little imagination to arrange simple combinations of the important features of the buildings described above, which would provide Pagan precedents for almost every type of church plan in Syria. In the North, as I have said above, there are far fewer remains of Pagan structures so well-preserved as those just described; yet there are fragments which prove that there were originally almost as many temples and other buildings of the Classical period in the North as in the South. We have no plans of northern Classical buildings which show any of the important features emphasized above, but this does not necessarily mean that no such features ever existed. It may be that the famous Tychaion at Antioch, like that at *Aere*, had an apsis and side

chambers. In any event, the plan of the northern churches was probably taken from Pagan buildings, as those of the southern churches were. Most of the southern buildings mentioned above present ornamental details of exceeding richness of design and delicacy of execution. Their doorways and doorcaps, their niches, their columns and entablatures, when such details appear, are adorned with a wealth of carved ornament which suggests Oriental splendor and love of elaboration. The buildings of the same period in the North, on the other hand, are severe in their Classic simplicity; they are almost devoid of naturalistic ornament and intricate pattern carving. In this connexion two seeming anomalies should be noted: first, in the South the stone is basalt — the hardest stone ever used for delicate carving; — while in the North the limestone is the most ideal material for this kind of work; and secondly, the Christian buildings of the South — the successors of these rich structures — are almost devoid of carving; while those of the North abound in almost every form of richly carved ornament that the mind of man has conceived.

3. CHURCHES OF SOUTHERN SYRIA

THE plans and the arrangement of the superstructures of the early churches of Southern Syria are so varied that it is convenient to discuss them under distinctly defined classes, as follows: Class 1, those buildings of simple undivided plan, with a transverse system of supports for a roof of stone slabs, which we shall call the Hall Churches; and Class 2, the three-aisled churches which also have the transverse system, and are also roofed in stone. Under Class 1, we shall find three types, (A) having a semicircular or rectangular sanctuary as wide, or almost as wide, as the nave; (B) having a triply divided east end consisting of an apse between side chambers; and (C) having a triply divided east end, but having a

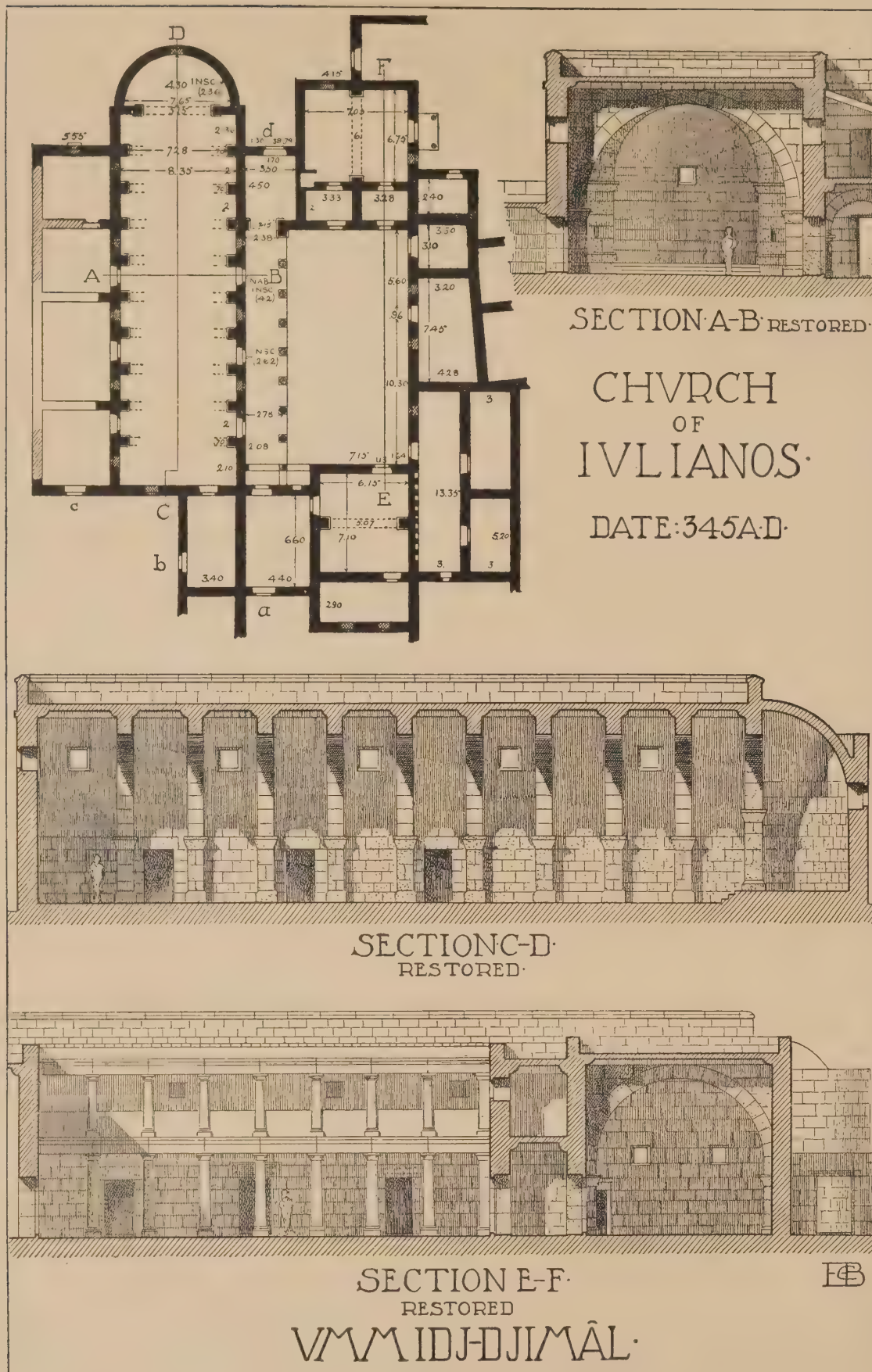
Early Churches in Syria.

rectangular sanctuary, substituted for an apsis. All three types have their prototypes in the Pagan architecture of the country.

CLASS 1, HALL CHURCHES WITH A TRANSVERSE SYSTEM

It is significant that the earliest dated church in all Syria should have been discovered in the ancient Christian-Arabic metropolis, now called Umm idj-Dimāl, which was perhaps the Roman *Thantia* and possibly *Beth Gamul* of the Bible. This walled city of the Nabataeans and Romans lies several leagues in the desert to the south of Boṣrā, in the midst of dead fields which were once rich and productive. At the

Early Churches in Syria



height of the city's career as a centre of Christian civilization, it boasted of as many as seventeen churches and monasteries, was the seat of a garrison, and contained an important government building. It is also significant that this earliest of dated churches should conform to the plan of the simplest Pagan antecedent of Christian architecture in Arabia.

Type A

*Umm idj-Djimâl. Church of Iulianos. Date, 344 A.D.*¹⁴

This is a hall church divided into ten bays by nine transverse arches springing from wall piers (*Ill.* 11). At the east end is a semicircular apse which is nearly as wide as the building itself. This is separated from the nave by an arch narrower than the others, but of the same height, being set on higher wall piers. The proportions of this building are almost identical with those of the Pagan hall of the Kaisariyeh at Shaḡḡā described above. The apse might have been copied from that of the "Basilica" at Boṣrā. There are three doorways in its south wall opening upon a colonnade. Four rooms were added along the north wall after the completion of the church, and three doorways were broken through the north wall to reach them. A small doorway at one side of the middle of the west wall opens into a small vestibule which may also have been added. At the east end of the south portico is a double arched vestibule which was the principal entrance from one of the streets of the city to the courtyard, or atrium, on the south side of the church. On the east, south, and west sides of the small atrium are residential buildings for the clergy. I doubt if these represent a monastic institution. The church was built of large blocks of basalt, smoothly dressed on the outer face and laid in clay, with occasional narrow bonding courses in the walls (*Ill.* 288 B). All the piers and arches are of highly finished stonework. The construction throughout is of the best quality. The transverse arches were built up in the spandrels to carry the slabs of the flat stone roof, exactly in the manner of the hall at Shaḡḡā. The windows were placed high in the side walls; those on the north opening out over the later one-storey rooms on that side, and those on the south looking out into an upper

storey of the colonnade. The decoration is of the plainest type, consisting of the right-lined caps of the piers of the interior and the simple Doric capitals of the larger and smaller order of the south portico. The inscription¹⁵ which gives the date 344 A.D. is on the lintel of the middle entrance of the south side. It reads as follows: *This is the memorial of Iulianos, weighed down with long sleep, for whom Agathos (his) father built (it), shedding a tear, hard by the bounds of (the) public cemetery of (the) people of Christ, to the end that the better folk might forever sing his praises publicly, as being aforetime a trusty (son) to Agathos, (the) presbyter, well beloved, being twelve years (old). In (the) year 239 (344 A.D.).* It is plain that this early church was a memorial, though probably not a place of burial. The open tract to the north of the church may have been the Christian cemetery of the town. This church is oriented about 3° to the south of east.

ʿAnz. Church.

A smaller and simpler example of the application of the transverse system of arches is to be seen in the little church at ʿAnz,¹⁶ somewhat nearer to Shaḡḡā. Here we find only four bays (*Ill.* 12), the easternmost of which was set off from the others as a rectangular sanctuary by an arch, narrower than the rest, elevated upon higher imposts. A portal at the west end gave upon a shallow porch with end walls, which was probably once provided with two columns. Another doorway, in the north wall, gave upon a small paved courtyard which was reached by a narrow paved and covered passage between residential buildings on the north side of the court. The church and the adjoining buildings were constructed of exceptionally fine masonry. The north portal of the church is decorated with simple pilasters, three wreaths carved in relief upon its lintel. The stonework and the ornament point to a date not later than the first half of the fourth century.

Dêr il-Kahf. Chapel. 367-375 A.D.

Another hall church of undoubtedly early date is the little chapel¹⁷ inside the fortress of Dêr il-Kahf

¹⁴ *P.* II, A. pp. 173.

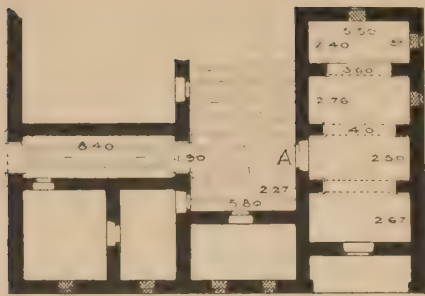
¹⁵ *P.* III, A. insc. 262.

There is some doubt whether this inscription should be associated with the original building of the church. While Professor Butler was convinced that it belonged to the church (*P.* II, A. p. 174), others have held that it came from some distant tomb (see note 1). The lintel itself which was found on the ground, a short distance from the middle portal on the south side of the church, was 1.58 m. long. The door was 1.33 m. wide, which would have left a bearing surface of only .125 m. on each jamb. While the lintel, which was .345 m. high, was strong enough to carry the span, it is most unlikely that the stone was cut originally for the doorway with such a narrow bearing surface on each side. In his field notes Professor Butler writes that the church "shows every sign of having been built at a very good period and renovated at a poor and later date". If the lintel came from a Christian tomb of 344 A.D., and was inserted in the church during a later rebuilding, it is still probable that the church was built in the fourth century.

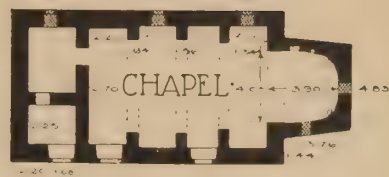
¹⁶ *P.* II, A. p. 132.

¹⁷ *P.* II A., d. 145-147, *Ill.* 127.

Early Churches in Syria



Ill. 12. Anz Church. Plan.



exterior buttresses. The east end is composed by a deep-set apse between long and narrow side chambers in two storeys. The apse is so deep that that its curve might be drawn to a complete circle within the apse arch. The chamber on the south side has an entrance in its east end. There is no interior ornament. The character of the columns of the porch is shown by D. and E. in the drawing.

*Dâmit il-ʿAlyā.*¹⁹ (*Damatha*).

Another form of the same type of church is to be seen at *Dâmit il-ʿAlyā* in the *Ledjā*. (*Ill.* 15). Here the long nave is abandoned for a much shorter one of only three bays. The transverse arches are retained, but are wider in proportion to the space between them. At the east end, the apse arch is narrower, and the side chambers correspondingly wider. The chamber on the south is connected directly with the apse by a small doorway. Since this chamber has also an outside entrance in the north wall, it may be assumed to have been the *prothesis*, because the chamber of that name is believed to have contained an altar upon which the faithful deposited their gifts which were often in kind.²⁰ An exit, in addition to an entrance from this aisle, would have facilitated the coming and going of the people. The other chamber would then have been the *diaconicon*, or vestry; but here it may be noted that the direct communication between the apse, i.e. the *presbyterium* or *sanctuary*, and the *diaconicon* would appear more important than one between the sanctuary and the *prothesis* as we find it here. The side chambers were in two storeys, and the whole structure was covered by a flat roof of slabs of basalt all on one level. The proportions of this building, and its general arrangement, are strikingly

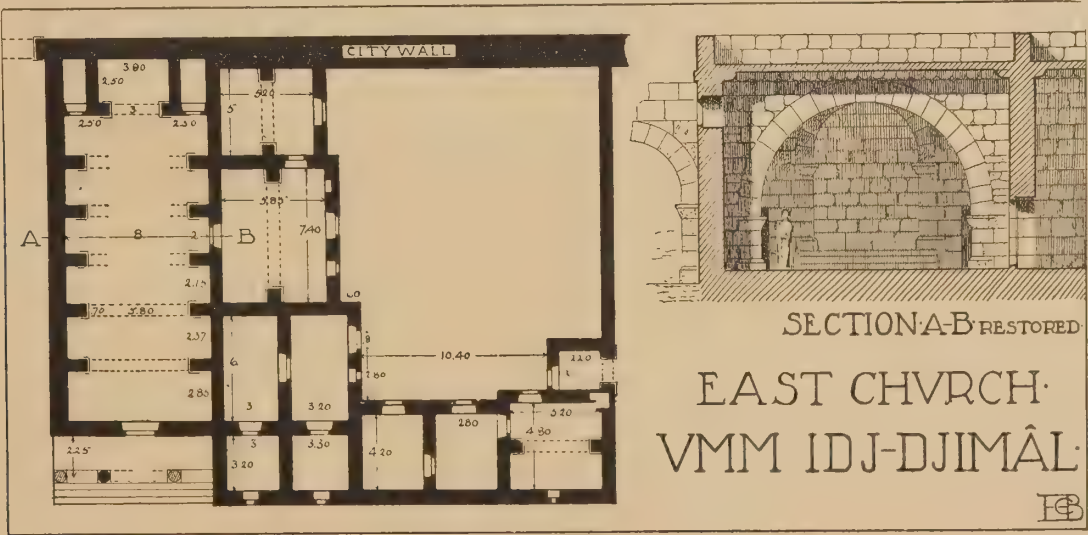


Ill. 15.

like the temple of Tyche at *iṣ-Ṣanamên* which is not more than thirty miles distant. This little building was constructed of roughly hewn blocks of very porous basalt. The interior is very plain, save for the right-lined caps of the piers which carry the arches, and the exterior displays its only bit of decoration in a moulding of right-lined profile which is carried across the west façade, and describes an elliptical curve above the portal, thus reflecting the design of the façade of the *Kaisariyeh* at *Shakḳā*.

Type C
Umm idj-Djimâl. East Church.

The third type of hall church, in one in which the long nave copied from buildings like the *Kaisariyeh* at *Shakḳā* is combined with a triply divided east end of a second form which also finds a Pagan precedent, and this in the Temple of Zeus at *Ḳanawât*.²¹ This type is well illustrated in the East Church at *Umm idj-Djimâl*,²² which, like the Church of *Masechos*, is situated beside one of the city gates. Here the nave consists of six bays (*Ill.* 16), and the arrangement of



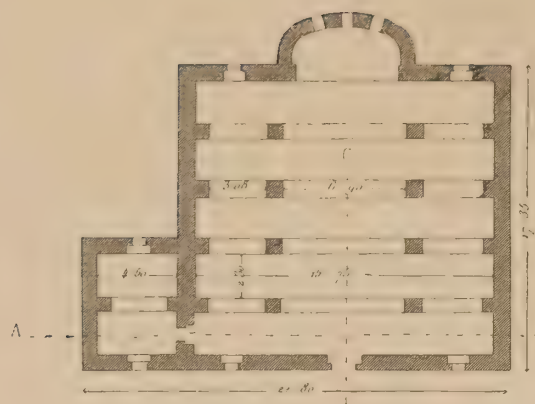
Ill. 16.

¹⁹ *P. II, A. p. 435.*

²⁰ Lowrie. *Monuments of the Early Church*, p. 126.

²¹ *P. II, A. Ill. 315.*

²² *P. II, A. p. 179.*



Ill. 17. *Tafhā. Church. Plan (after de Vogüé).*

the east end differs from that of the end opposite the entrance, i.e. the south end of the Temple of Zeus, only in having the doorways of the chambers which flank the rectangular sanctuary open into the nave, while those of the chambers beside the rectangular recess in the temple open directly into the recess itself. To the south of this church is a group of residential buildings communicating with the nave by means of a doorway in the south wall. The buildings occupy two sides of an enclosed court, the west side and the side adjoining the church. There are three large arched rooms one storey high, and six smaller apartments in two storeys, beside a vestibule in the south wall of the court. These buildings, together with the church, probably composed a small monastery, and I shall refer to the group again in a chapter dealing with the monasteries. Another building of the same type as the church is to be seen in the southern half of the double church at Khâzimeh.²³

CLASS. 2. THREE-AISLED CHURCHES WITH TRANSVERSE SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

A totally different class of building is represented by those churches of Southern Syria which combine the three-aisled basilical ground plan with the transverse system of supports, and which find their prototype in the Pagan "Basilica" of Shaḡḡā. At one time this form of church was believed to be typical of the Christian architecture of the Ḥaurân, and the drawings of the church at Tafhā published by M. de Vogüé were reproduced again and again to illustrate the church architecture of the basalt country of Southern Syria. But more extensive exploration of the region has shown

that this class of structures was extremely rare and confined to a very limited area in the mountains in the immediate neighbourhood of Shaḡḡā, in which place the Pagan prototype was found. Moreover, the second century "Basilica" at Shaḡḡā appears to have been unique of its kind among the buildings of the Roman period, for no other early example of this peculiar plan and system has been discovered. The "Basilica" of Shaḡḡā,²⁴ already described above,²⁵ is nearly square, and consists of seven bays divided by a quintuple arrangement of transverse arches. These transverse walls, pierced by one large and four small arches, are placed very close together and are connected on the ground floor by narrow longitudinal arches. The front and rear walls are pierced by three doorways, the side walls have no openings.

Tafhā.

The church at Tafhā²⁶ which appears to be the oldest of the Christian progeny of the "Basilica", is also nearly square, it has five bays, wider in proportion than those of the "Basilica", but has no longitudinal connecting arches (Ill. 17). There is but one doorway in the west wall though there is one in either side wall, and the east end is provided with a shallow apse of elliptical form. This apse has three windows. This church is the best preserved of the buildings of its class (Ill. 18).

Shaḡḡā (Saccaea), Convent,²⁷ 368(?) A.D.

The church connected with the convent at Shaḡḡā, as published by M. de Vogüé, shows some changes of proportion; it is oblong, and has six bays which are still wider in proportion. It has three doorways at the west end, and a semicircular apse. There were no galleries over the aisles. This is perhaps the Church of St. George, dated 368, mentioned in an inscription found at Shaḡḡā.

Nimreh,²⁸ (Namara).

The church at Nimreh (Ill. 19) follows the oblong shape, it also has six bays, much wider than those of the prototype, and appears to have terminated toward the east in an apse between side chambers; but the conditions are such at this end of the church that thorough examination is, for the time, impossible. A distinct change is noticeable here, not only in the

²³ P. II, A. p. 128, Ill. 103.

²⁴ S. C. Pl. 15.

²⁵ Cf. p. 16.

²⁶ S. C. Pl. 17. u. c. II, p. 408.

According to Professor Butler's field notes, "There is an entrance at the West end and one in the second bay of the South aisle". The other doorway in the side walls opens into the tower on the North side. This tower "bears little resemblance to de Vogüé careful drawing".

²⁷ S. C. Pls. 18, 22.

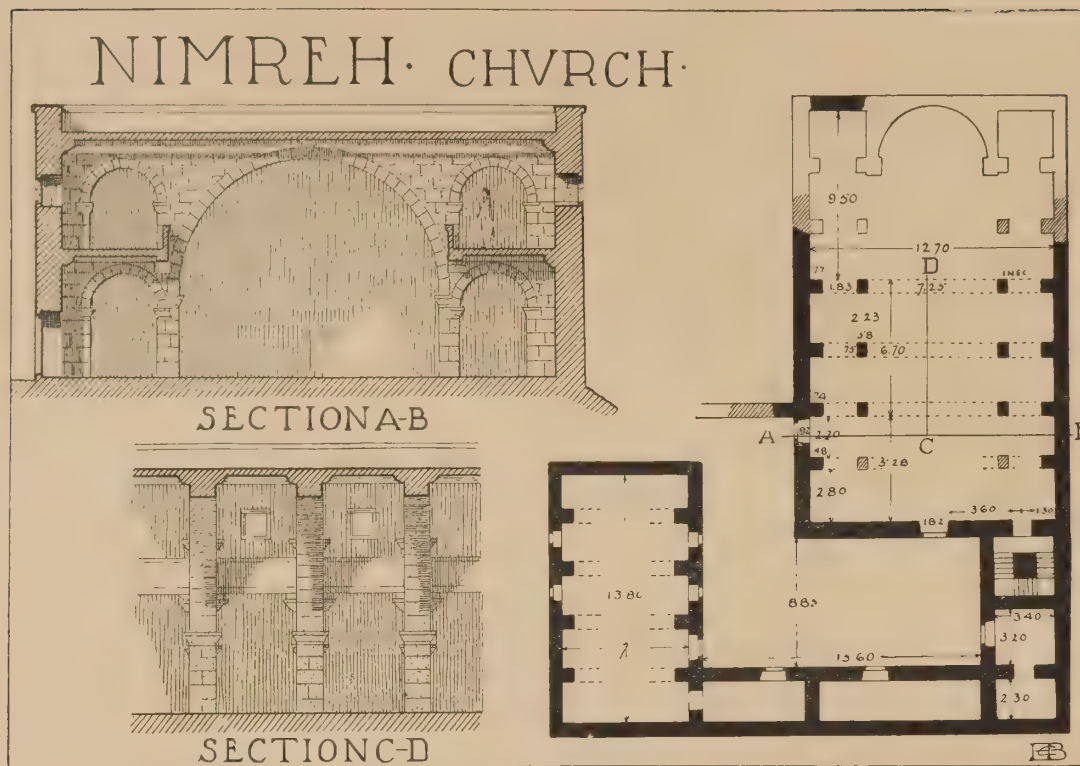
²⁸ P. II, A. p. 343.



Ill. 18. Tafhā. Church, interior looking Northwest.



Ill. 19. Nimreh. Church, interior looking West.



Ill. 20.

proportions of the ground plan, but in those of the superstructure. If the Section A-B in *Ill.* 20 be compared with the corresponding Section of the "Basilica" (*Ill.* 10) or with that of the church at Tafḥa, it will be observed that the side aisles are narrower in proportion to the middle aisle, and that the arches, both upper and lower, which span the aisles, are higher and of more pleasing proportions. The supports in this church are exceedingly slender, especially when one considers the enormous weight of the arches and roof which they were designed to carry; yet more than half of them are in place after nearly sixteen hundred years.

Kanawât. (Kanatha).

The only other known examples of this class of church are not well-preserved. In one of his plans, ²⁹ M. de Vogüé shows a church of this kind which was erected within a Pagan temple at Kanawât. The temple, already mentioned in these pages, ³⁰ faced the north; it was prostyle, and terminated at the end opposite the entrance in a tri-lobed apsis between rectangular side chambers. The new three-aisled church ³¹ was erected within this (*Ill.* 8.), with its major axis at right angles to that of the original building. It had five bays. An apse with side chambers, — suggested perhaps by the arrangement of the Pagan building —,

was placed against, and within, the east wall of the temple, the tri-lobed apse was walled up, but the doorways of its side chambers were left to open upon the south side of the nave; the new north wall was erected upon the foundations of the front wall of the temple, and the beautiful portico of the temple became a side porch of the church. The new west front was set out a whole bay beyond the line of the west wall of the temple. It was made up in large part of fragments of an old Nabataean building and was very beautiful — the only beautiful west front in all the churches of Southern Syria. ³² This church is now a mass of ruins within; only the west wall, described above, and the Pagan north porch remaining in good preservation.

Other Examples.

In a complex of modern buildings at Shehbā ³³, ancient *Philippopolis*, the Roman city built by the Arab emperor Philip to mark his birthplace, there is evidence of the former existence of one of these three-aisled churches with the transverse systems of supports. It is impossible to make out its plan in the débris and modern work which surround it. Evidence of a similar sort, and similarly hidden, is to be found at Atil ³⁴, ancient *Athela*, not far from the other places in which this kind of Christian building has been found.

²⁹ S. C. Pl. 19.

³⁰ Cf. p. 15.

³¹ A. II, p. 407.

³² A. II, p. 407.

³³ Professor Butler makes no mention of this church in his other publications, but Brünnow, *Die Provincia Arabia*, III, p. 163, refers to a church which was built within the "Little Temple."

³⁴ No mention is made of this temple in his other writings, but Brünnow, *Die Provincia Arabia*, III, p. 106, lists it as among the ruins.

4. CHURCHES OF NORTHERN SYRIA

CHURCH architecture in the limestone country of the North is far more beautiful to contemplate, even in its earliest stages, than is that of the basalt region of the South. In the hill country lying east of the Orontes, and stretching far away to the northeast, every element of design and of construction that contributes to the beautiful in architecture was employed in the erection of churches, to an extent almost unknown at the time in any other part of the Christian world. The material at hand was an important factor here, but this alone could have accomplished little if there had been no spirit of artistic endeavor and appreciation among the people, for the majority of the churches discussed in these pages were the work of local, native builders. In the matter of ground plan we find far less variety in the North than we have already seen in the South, perhaps because there was a smaller variety in the Pagan prototypes afforded by the country; but in all those matters which contribute more directly to beauty of effect, such as proportions, the relation of voids to solids, the distribution of masses, the employment of mouldings, the application of carved ornament, and the refined treatment of details, the Northern architects showed themselves masters of abundant skill and fertile imagination. And these Northern architects, or builders, whichever we choose to call them — for they were in many cases probably both — appear to have been persons of more prominence than their brothers of the South, if we are to accept the evidence of the inscriptions. There are about ten inscriptions which mention the names of architects in the North to one in the South. The term employed is usually *τεχνίτης*. These men were sometimes deacons, or held other offices; one is mentioned as having had the distinction of being buried in the sanctuary of one of the churches which he designed.

The oblong basilical type, with a longitudinal system of supports and a semicircular apse between side chambers at the east end, furnished the most universal ground plan of these Northern churches of the fourth century. There are to be found in the region small chapels with undivided naves, but all of them appear to belong to later periods. Variety was introduced into these plans only in minor details, such as the number of bays in the nave and the placing of entrances, and to a certain extent, in the proportions of part to part. In the superstructures a similar uniformity pre-

vails. Columnar supports for the arcades, lofty clear-storeys and timber roofs are the invariable accompaniments of the basilical plan. And again, diversity is presented only in details of less importance, such as the arrangement of the roofs at the east end, the employment of the arcuated lintel or the true arch in the nave arcades, or permitting part of the curve of the apse to show on the exterior instead of concealing it by a flat wall. The great variety and diversity of treatment, however, is to be seen in their ornament in which respect they are placed in strong contrast with the churches of Southern Syria. Ornamental details are not profuse in these early structures, yet we find the Doric order employed throughout in some examples, the Ionic or Corinthian in others, and two or three orders combined in others. And these different usages are not fixed by local practice, but are found well scattered over the entire region. There is also a slight diversity in the actual use of material, and this was due very probably, in part at least, to local conditions. In certain regions we find that the walls of the early churches were built of ponderous blocks of stone carefully finished. In other regions the body of the walls was composed of a sort of double-faced polygonal masonry also finished; in others still, of small undressed stones of irregular shapes set in clay; but in all cases the frames of doorways and windows, and in most cases the entire east end, together with the arches of the interior, were made of highly finished stone.

The earliest church in Northern Syria which bears a definitely dated inscription is one at Fāfirtīn, and this is dated in the year 372; but a careful examination of the other churches of the region convinces one that this was not the first church to be built here, nor yet the earliest of those which are still to be seen in their ruined state. There are no less than seven churches which, for various reasons, may be reckoned as earlier than the church of Fāfirtīn by at least two decades. These may be grouped as dating about the middle of the fourth century; some of them being perhaps a little earlier, others later, than the year 350.

*Bānḳūsā. North Church*³⁵.

The deserted ruin of Bānḳūsā is situated in the Djebel Bārīshā, near the middle of the region which we have delimited as Northern Syria. There are two churches here, the more northern of which has every appearance of being among the oldest christian buildings

³⁵ A. II, p. 88.

Corinthian caps which show that the architect was familiar with good Classical models. A small cross was carved in the middle of each abacus. The caps of the arch piers of the apse are of the same profile as the impost moulding of the half dome, which was set on the same level as the capitals of the half columns. The apse arch had a moulded archivolt of little projection. The doorway of the side chamber is provided with a simple door-cap, the profile of which corresponds to door-caps definitely dated about the middle of the fourth century. The capitals of the interior columns did not match those of the half columns at the ends of the arcades, for they are of a very simple Tuscan order, with an echinus which is a cyma recta in profile. Here again the three-piece arch was used above the columns, as in Bānḳûsā, but the blocks which form the lower part of the semicircle were raised upon plain cubical blocks which stilted the arches considerably. The windows of the clearstorey were rectangular in form, as may be seen by their lintels which are lying in the nave.

*Midjleyyā.*³⁸

This is another deserted ruin in the Djebel Rîḥā. The basilica preserves its west wall, its north wall, and about three quarters of its east end up to the level of the springing of the half dome. The ground plan is typical (*Ill.* 23). Its size and proportions are quite like the two foregoing, except that the nave gains still more in length, so that its proportions have the relation of 5 to 3. The entrance to the north chamber, which we shall call the prothesis in this case, is a three-piece arch and is still in place. The nave had nine bays; the intercolumniations being 2.07 m. wide. The dividing columns were set on high plinth blocks, their bases are of good Attic profile, but have little projection, and their capitals are Corinthian in type; leaves are uncut and the Classic volutes and caulicoli give place to a number of ornamental devices which give variety to the capitals (*Ill.* 264). The capitals of the responds, on the other hand, which are again half columns, are beautifully modelled after a Classic type. They are cleverly compounded with the caps of the apse piers. Here again the impost moulding of the apse is placed at the level of the capital. There is a small rectangular window in the apse with a sunken semicircular panel carved above it. For a third time the three-piece arch appears, and once more in stilted form. But in this place the uppermost blocks are banded and moulded like fourth century architraves. The wall of the north aisle, which is



Ill. 23. *Midjleyyā. Church, plan.*

is completely preserved, shows narrow loophole windows high up, deeply splayed on the inside, and with slight curves cut in the lintels. The clearstorey windows were rectangular as at Serdjillā, and there was apparently one window over each arch of the nave.

*Ruwêḥā, South Church.*³⁹

The elder of the two churches in Ruwêḥā, which is one of the most extensive of the deserted and ruined towns of the Djebel Rîḥā, on some accounts, might have been taken to be more ancient than the other two churches from this same mountain district. For other reasons, however, it seems to be a little later than either of them. Too much perhaps should not be made of the fact that the nave arcades of this basilica are composed of true arches, while the arches of the others are only arched in form. Yet one is inclined to look upon the three-piece arch as a sign of antiquity, since it is found only in churches that have other primitive forms and because it would be a logical form of construction at a period when the arch was being set directly upon columns for the first time in the whole history of architecture. In all other respects, the South Church of Ruwêḥā is primitive enough, and this is the more evident for the reason that the building is exceptionally well-preserved, — only the north arcade, the north wall, side chamber and the half dome of the apse having fallen, leaving the west front (*Ill.* 24) and all the southern half of the church intact, so far as stonework is concerned (*Ill.* 25).

The plan presents no important innovations (*Ill.* 26). The nave has nine bays, like the preceding. There are two entrances in the south wall as usual, three in the west front and one in each aisle. This, of course, was not true of Bānḳûsā where the west wall was rock-hewn; and in Serdjillā there was only one west portal, if any, in the original plan, while in Midjleyyā there was certainly only one. The side entrances indispensable in the Syrian churches, perhaps because of the fact that the church was divided transversely for the separation of the sexes, the men

³⁸ *A.* II, p. 96.

³⁹ *A.* II, p. 99.

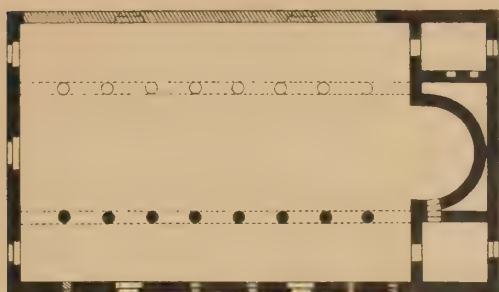
Early Churches in Syria



Ill. 24. Ruwêḥā. South church, West façade.



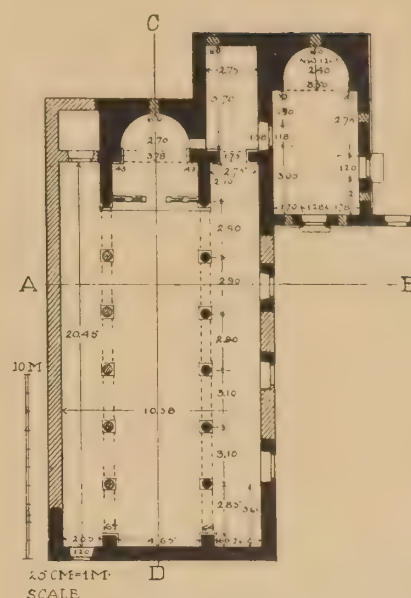
Ill. 25. Ruwêḥā. South Church, interior looking South East.



Ill. 26. *Ruwêḥā. South Church, plan.*

occupying the eastern half and the women the western. The more symmetrical arrangement with three western portals, common in the early Latin basilicas, was apparently not considered as essential by the Syrian builders, even in some of their larger churches, and seems not to have been required by ceremonial forms. The nave arcades consist of columns carrying true arches of nine voussoirs each, not stilted. The clear-storey windows are rectangular and are placed one over each arch, with two in the west front. The windows in the side aisle are mere loopholes. The east end is sufficiently well-preserved to show that the double-pitched roof of the nave was carried all the way through to a gable at the top of the east wall. This may be a feature peculiar to the early churches, for it is found in none of the later apsidal basilicas in which the east end is preserved. The chamber on the south of the apse was carried up in two storeys, and it is probable that the north chamber was similarly treated. The ornament throughout the church is exceedingly simple. The capitals of the columns of the nave arcades are of the Doric order, of a Greek rather than a Roman type, for they have no astragal and no necking and the profile of the echinus is good. Three of the nine standing columns have brackets of a peculiar Syrian type projecting on both sides in the direction of the axis of the arcade. These brackets have no apparent reason for existence and detract from the beauty of the general effect. At the east end of the colonnades, in place of engaged columns or other form of responds, there are simple bracket caps set on the impost level. The impost moulding of the half dome of the apse is of the simplest profile. Outside of the details described above there is no other ornament within the church.

The ornament of the exterior consists chiefly of a well balanced cornice, in profile a cyma recta, which crowns all the walls, and is used for the two gables and the half gables at the end of the aisles. It is also drawn straight across the two pediments. The side portals are severely plain, the easternmost having a



Ill. 27. *Simkhâr. Church and chapel, plan.*

right-lined door-cap of early fourth century profile. But the three western portals are dignified by door-caps of somewhat more decorative character, the middle one showing a bevelled fascia carved with intricate interlaces in flat relief. All three lintels have ornamental discs carved upon the flat surface of the ends of the door-caps; but none of these discs gives a suggestion of Christian symbolism, except for a number of crudely incised crosses which might have been added at any time after the church was built.

The Djebel Sim'ân.

The early churches of the Djebel Sim'ân, which is the northernmost district of Northern Syria, present a number of interesting contrasts to those of the Djebel Riḥā. The latter, as we have just seen, are built entirely of ordinary quadrated masonry, 55 cm. thick, while the walls of the former are of two kinds; one, a sort of double-faced polygonal masonry, the other, composed of undressed field stones set in clay, both kinds being from 75 to 80 cm. thick. In the matter of ground plans, where the differences are less conspicuous, the most salient difference is in the increased width of the arches of the nave and the consequent reduction of the number of bays.

*Simkhâr.*⁴⁰

This church is of the long, narrow basilical type (Ill. 27). It has a small apse, and originally had two square side-chambers, but that on the south was lengthened toward the east after the completion of

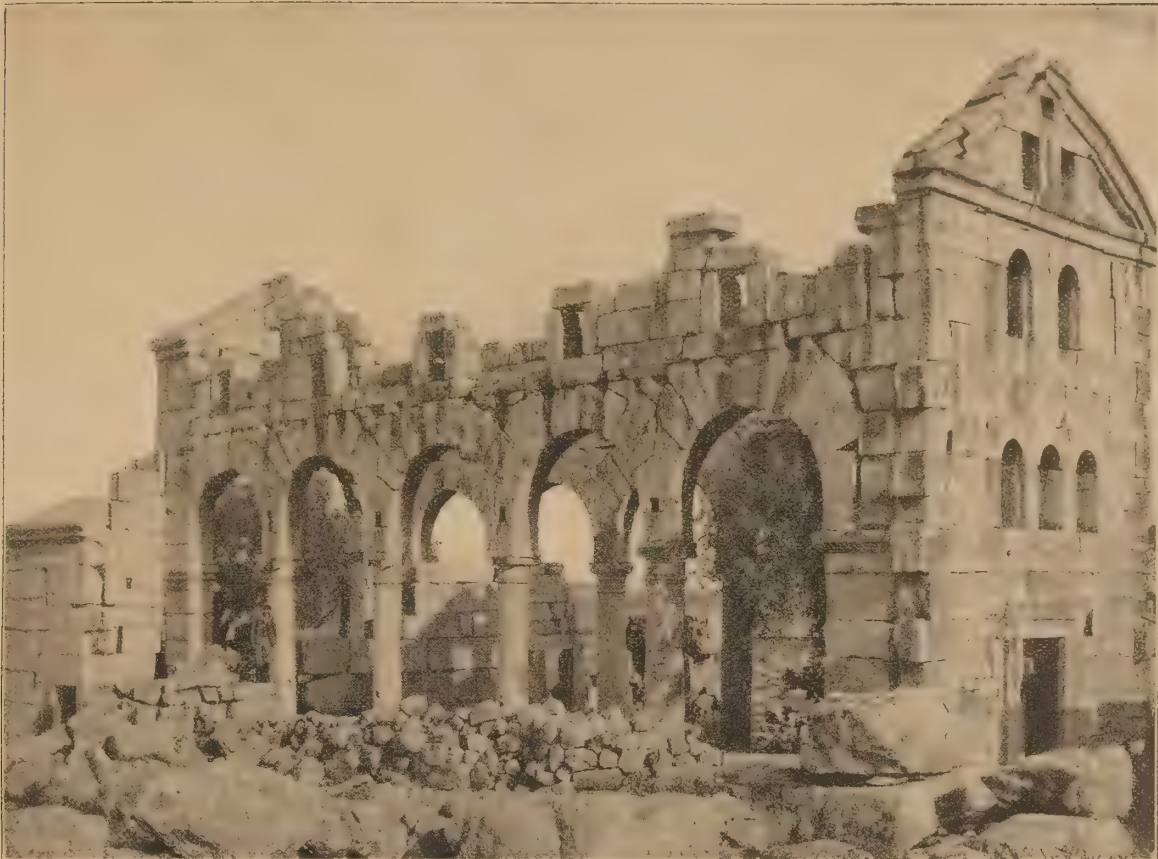
⁴⁰ P. II, B. p. 334—336, Ill. 381, 382, 383.



Ill. 28. Simkhâr. Church at left and Chancel at right.



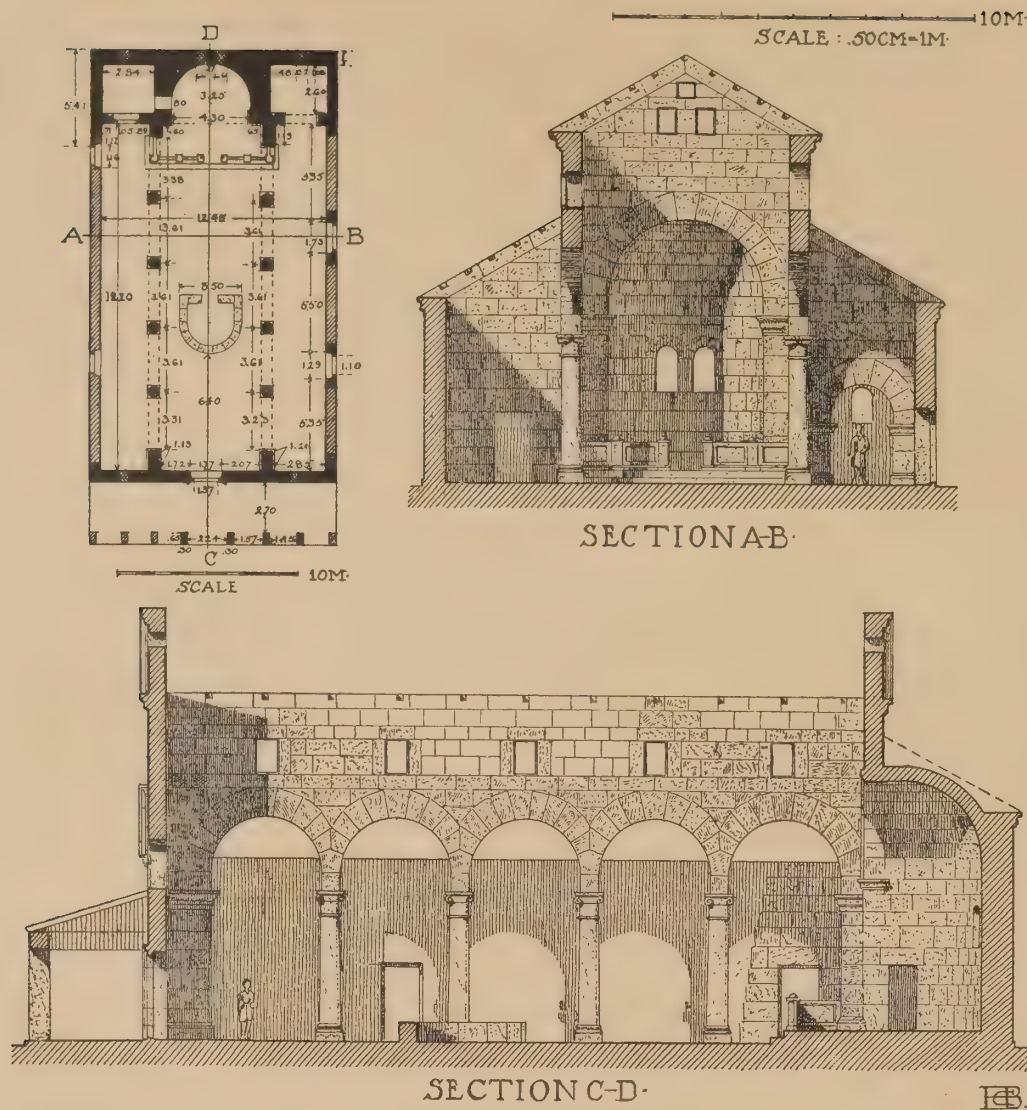
Ill. 29. Burdj Hêdar. West Church, exterior from the Southwest.



Ill. 30. Kharâb Shems. Church, exterior from the Northwest.

the church, and an arch was placed at its entrance at the same time. This chamber is directly connected with the apse by means of a narrow doorway. The nave is in reality seven-bayed, but the easternmost bay of both nave arcades is taken up by two walls which project forward from the apse, enclosing the bema on two sides. (*Ill.* 197 A.). The responds at this end of the arcades are half columns engaged with the ends of the two projecting walls. The opposite responds, at the west, are rather flat pilaster piers. There are three doorways in the south wall. The west wall, the south arcade and most of the east end up to the crown of the half dome are standing, (*Ill.* 28). The south wall is only partly preserved and only half of the clearstorey remains in place. The whole structure is quite primitive and in strong contrast to the chapel, which was added to the south side of the east end in the sixth century. The south wall is double-faced and composed of small and irregularly shaped blocks roughly quadrate, but not well finished. The door jambs and lintels are monolithic and entirely plain. The north wall was built of field stones, laid in clay. The rectangular windows of the clearstorey are framed by three long blocks set in the irregular masonry of

the clearstorey wall. The main arches are not stilted and are composed of seven voussoirs which spring from common impost blocks with a double bevel at the top; and the voussoirs, being thicker than the impost in order to carry the thick wall above them, project out beyond the imposts on the side toward the aisle. The columns are short and thick, and have a pronounced entasis. Their capitals are Ionic, all but one which is Doric. The Ionic capitals are of a very debased type with small billet-like scrolls. These, and the single Doric capital, have a tall necking above a well turned cincture at the top of the shaft. The mouldings of the apse arch, which may be later than the original building, together with the capitals of the arcades, constitute the only interior constructional ornament. The four panels of a chancel rail between the side walls of the bema are almost hidden in débris, but they show considerable richness of design. The exterior was practically devoid of ornament. There are no traces even of the usual cornice. A six-armed cross forming the monogram of Christ, carved in very low relief in the middle of the westernmost portal in the side aisle, is the only bit of Christian symbolism visible in the ruin.



Ill. 31. Kharâb Shems. Church, plan and sections.

*Burdj Hêdar. West Church.*⁴¹

This church, also in the Djebel Sim'ân, is introduced here as an example of uniformity of style. It is one of the few churches which preserves both of its nave arcades; but it preserves little else (Ill. 29). The walls were made of ordinary field stones laid in clay and have entirely disintegrated. The details in cut stone are the nave arcade, the apse, the jambs of the aisle portals and the frames of the clearstorey windows. The plan was greatly altered at the southeast angle when the prothesis was rebuilt and greatly extended (Ill. 211); but the rest of the church remains in its original shape, so far as plan is concerned. The side aisles are disproportionately wide, so that the church would be classed among the later structures if there were not so many other features that confirm an early date. The six bays of the nave are divided by Doric columns of excellent proportions and careful finish.

⁴¹ P. II, B. p. 288, Ill. 311.

The arches are composed of eleven voussoirs, two of which on either side are shared with the other arches. They are not stilted. The two south portals stand erect in the midst of their dismembered walls, each has a simple door-cap, the eastern one of which has rather a more elaborate profile than the other, though both are similar to door-caps which are dated in the fourth century.

*Kharâb Shems.*⁴²

This church is one of the best preserved religious edifices in Northern Syria. Its side walls, which were built of field stone laid in clay, have fallen, and the half dome of the apse has been wrecked by an oak tree which has grown up within the sanctuary; otherwise the building is almost intact but for its timber roofs (Ill. 30). The nave has only five bays (Ill. 31). These are divided by arcades in which all the columns but one are Ionic, the exception being Corinthian in

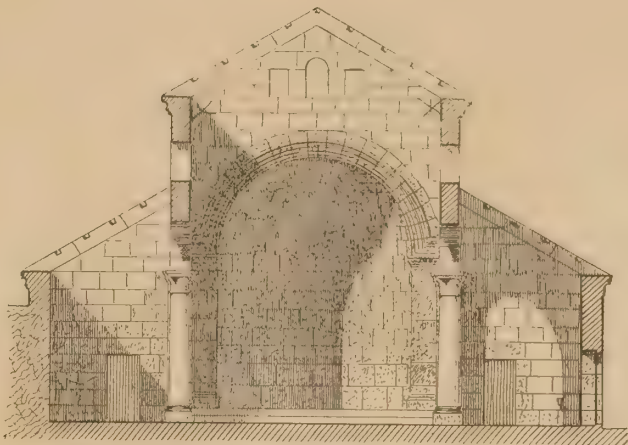
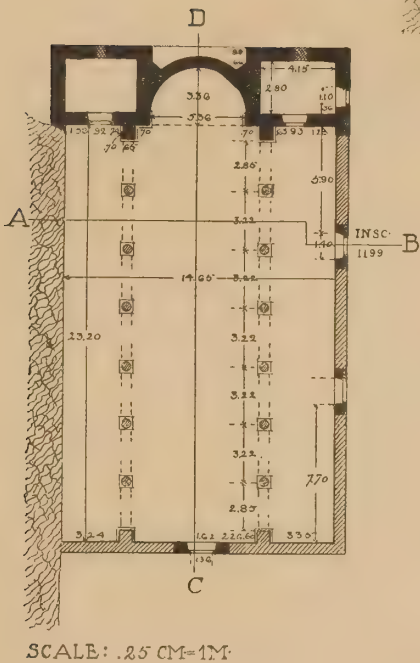
⁴² P. II, B. pp. 322—325, Ill. 363, 364.

FĀFIRTÎN.

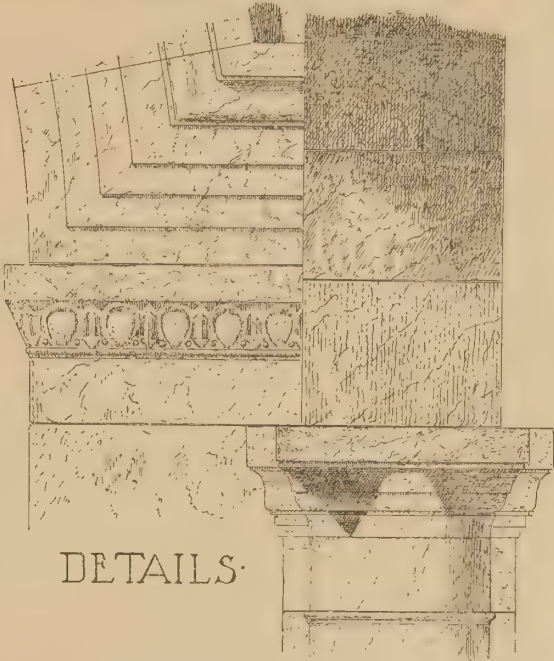
CHVRCH.

DATE:

AVG. 372 A.D.



SECTION A-B.



DETAILS.

Ill. 32.

general form. The arches are broad and high, being stilted on cubical impost blocks. The clearstorey windows above the north aisle are rectangular and framed by three monoliths set in walls of irregular construction; those on the other side are arcuated, as the result of restorations in the fifth century. The jambs and lintels of the south portals are severely plain; but the west portal was provided with frame mouldings. This church, and that at Ruwêḥā, are the only buildings in Northern Syria, mentioned thus far in this chapter, which preserve their west façades. It is interesting to compare the two. That of Kharâb Shems is much narrower and much higher in its proportions, it has but one portal, and windows in the ends of the aisles. It has three arcuated windows on the level of the arches within, where the façade of Ruwêḥā is blank, two arcuated windows on the clearstorey level, in place of rectan-

gular openings, and a small square window over the two rectangles in its pediment, where the other church has three arcuated windows. The opposite pediment is still in place, mouldings and all, above the chancel arch, instead of at the extreme east end of the church as is the case at Ruwêḥā. The half dome of the apse was covered by a lean-to roof, the side chambers, by continuations of the aisle roofs.

*Fāfirtîn. 372 A.D.*⁴³

This brings us to the earliest of the dated churches in Northern Syria, situated in the heart of the Djebel Simʿân. The apse here is perfectly preserved; all the rest of the church has been thrown down, but all its parts are lying as they fell. Practically the whole of the north wall was cut out of the natural rock of the hillside. The nave had seven bays (Ill. 32), one portal

Early Churches in Syria.

⁴³ P. II, n. p. 327, Ill. 370.

at the west end and two in the south aisle. The apse was flanked by square side chambers both entered from the aisles through narrow doorways, the south chamber having also an outer doorway on the south. The exterior curve of the apse is permitted to show between the side chambers, but the apse had no windows. The columns of the nave arcade are of a Doric or a Tuscan type, the echinus of the capital consisting of two mouldings, — an ovolo above a cavetto. These capitals are well proportioned and graceful, having a tall necking above the astragal of the shaft. The responds are pilaster piers with cap mouldings of delicate cyma recta profile, while the apse piers have caps of Doric outline carved with a peculiar Christian variety of egg-and-dart. The apse is richly decorated with mouldings consisting of four bands under a cymatium. These mouldings are returned outward at the spring of the arch showing their descent from the arcuated entablatures of Classical monuments in Syria. On the keystone is carved a disc embracing a studded cross. The doorways, exterior and interior, and the rectangular windows of the clearstorey were devoid of ornament of any kind. The lintel of the east doorway of the south aisle bears the inscription which gives the date. All the details of this building are treated with a delicacy of design and a refinement of workmanship that are wanting in the churches of the neighbourhood which have been described above, and therefore I have not hesitated to place all of them in the earlier quarters of the century.

*Kefr Nabō.*⁴⁴

It is only now and then that fragments of Pagan temples are found incorporated in the churches of Northern Syria. In the church of Kefr Nabō the lower courses of the wall of the apse are composed of large column drums split in two lengthwise. Few remains of this building are standing to a height of over a metre above the ground, except one column which was miraculously spared in the general collapse. The church was a comparatively large one, but it appears that all its walls must have been built of small field stone or even of mud-brick, for hardly any quadrated stones are to be seen. The plan, however, is easily made out. The nave had seven bays and the proportions of 2 to 3. The apse connects directly with the north side chamber, the east wall is straight as usual. Both side chambers are entered by doorways. There are two doorways in the south aisle, but apparently no west portal. The capitals of the columns of the nave arcade seem to have been uniformly of the Ionic

type most common in these early churches. No other ornament could be discovered.

*Bāshamrā.*⁴⁵

Here is another completely ruined church, of much the same type as the foregoing. The nave has the proportions of 2 to 3 and is divided into seven bays. The order of the columns is Doric of a very simple type with straight echinus. Only the arches, the apse and the frames of the doorways and windows were of cut stone.

*Bātūtā.*⁴⁶

This little church should be assigned to the fourth century on the grounds of its wall structure and of the plainness of its door and window frames. The apse and the south arcade of the nave, with the clearstorey above it, and part of west wall are standing. The nave has only five bays, the east end presents the regular plan. For the first time we see an effort toward great variety in the capitals of the columns. There are no two alike on one side, but the two sides were apparently balanced. At the east end is a Corinthian capital without volutes, next comes the Ionic of the common variety, then a Tuscan capital with a cyma recta in the echinus, and finally a four-sided Ionic. All these capitals have the same apparent height owing to the necking above the cincture. The caps of the responds are delicately moulded, those of the apse piers are of a crude Corinthian design. The apse arch is slightly drawn in at its springing, giving a horseshoe effect. Its mouldings are returned outward at the springing, like those of Fāfirtin. The arches of the nave are comparatively wide and are not stilted. The clearstorey walls were built of quadrated blocks, but the rectangular windows are set in with heavy monolithic jambs and lintels. The aisle walls are partly in double-faced polygonal masonry. The doorways were perfectly plain.

*Brād, Cathedral.*⁴⁷

The great church at Brād is here referred to as a "cathedral" because it is the largest church in the entire region of Northern Syria and is situated in the largest ruined town, which was perhaps originally *Barade*. The church is in an almost completely ruined state. Only the eastern responds of the nave arcades, the apse piers, the walls of the side chambers and the lower courses of the apse are in place at the east end, and only the lower storey of the western façade is standing. But all the details are lying as they fell

⁴⁴ P. II, B. pp. 293--299, Ill. 323

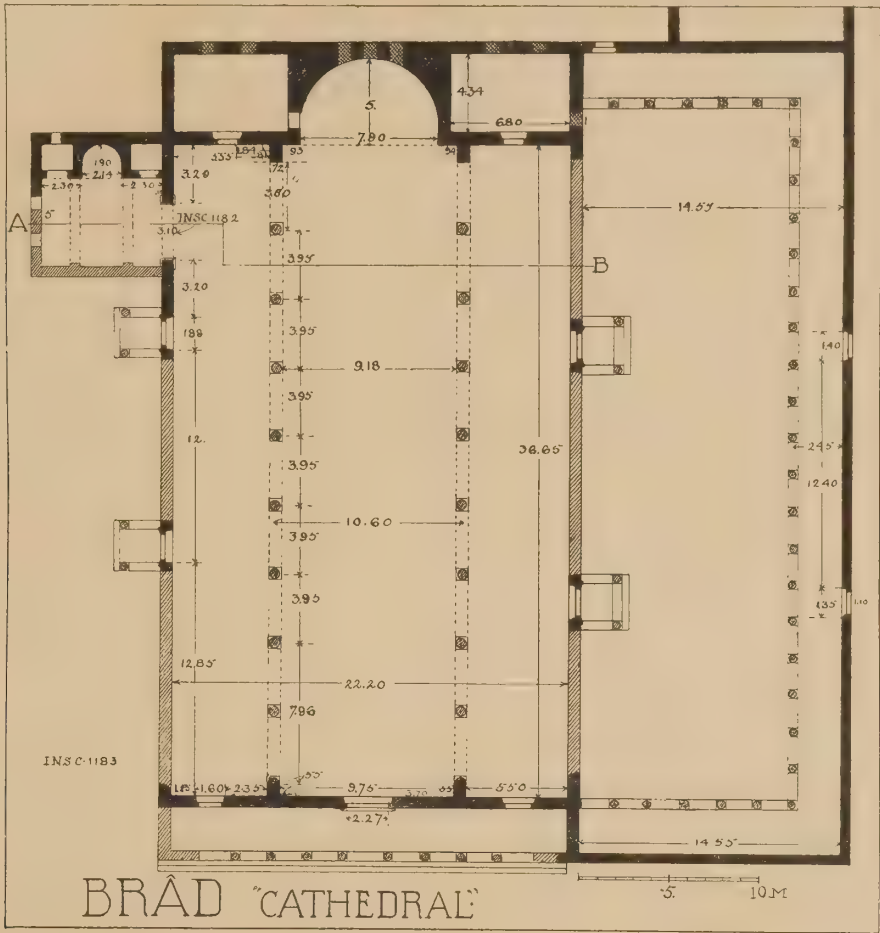
⁴⁶ P. II, B. p. 330, Ill. 374.

⁴⁵ P. II, B. p. 325, Ill. 365.

⁴⁷ P. II, B. p. 305, Ills. 337—339.

at the time of some great earthquake, and it is not difficult to draw a restoration of the whole structure. The nave has the proportions of 3 to 5, (Ill. 33) it is 36 m. long and 22 m. wide. It was divided into nine wide bays. The east end is regular in plan, with doorways leading into the side chambers and a doorway between the apse and the north chamber. The caps of the eastern responds are delicately moulded, and those of the apse piers are of Doric type carved with egg-and-dart, exactly like those in the church of Fārīrtīn and not found elsewhere; for this reason,

chapel which was joined onto the north aisle at its east end. There are three western portals and a colonnaded narthex. The doorways at the ends of the aisles are plain and of small importance; but the middle portal is a large, dignified entrance which was certainly inspired by Classical models (Ill. 34). It is framed in mouldings of good Classical profile, and its lintel is flanked by consoles which carry a salient cornice. Above this the ruin preserves sufficient details to show that there was a large triple-arched opening divided by colonnettes and flanked by engaged colonnettes.



Ill. 33.

among others, one need not hesitate to give this church approximately the same date. The capitals of the nave arcades present a new design; the upper part being Doric in general outline, with a heavy right-lined echinus carved with perpendicular or twisted grooves, the necking being decorated with eight erect, plain arum leaves.

To the south of the church was an oblong atrium, colonnaded on three sides. The two portals on both the south and north sides were provided with distyle porches; but these may be later additions like the

*Bā'ūdeh, Church*⁴⁸ 392 A.D.

There is a small church in the Djebel Bārīshā, at the ruin of this name, which dates from the end of the century. This little building is so completely demolished that it is impossible to determine its form at the east end; but fallen stones from a half dome give assurance that it had an apse, and the walls of the side chambers are still to be seen beneath the débris. The proportions of the nave are entirely changed from those common in the churches of this century. There are only four bays, and the nave is so wide as

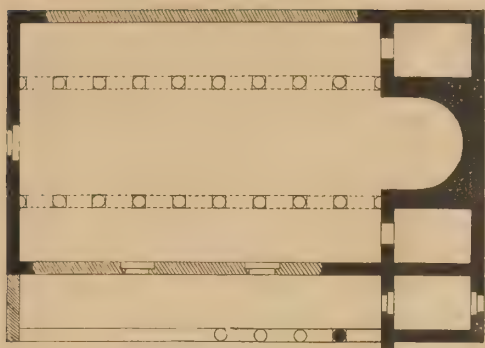
⁴⁸ P. II, B. p. 162, Ill. 174.



Ill. 34. Brâd. "Cathedral", West Façade.



Ill. 35. Khirbit Hâss. Church, interior looking towards apse.



Ill. 36. *Khirbit Hâss. Church, plan.*

to give a nearly square outline to the nave. These short naved churches were not unusual in the fifth and sixth centuries. The interior ornament here consists of the capitals of the columns of the nave arcades. These are in two varieties, so far as could be discovered; one, of Doric form, having a bevelled echinus carved with fillets interlaced about small symbolic discs; the other a crude representation of the Ionic capital. One of the south doorways is framed in good mouldings consisting of two fascias, a cyma and a flat band.

*Khirbit Hâss.*⁴⁹ (*Shinshara*).

This church (Ill. 35) takes us back to the Djebel Rîhâ, and to a church published in a plan and a sketch by M. de Vogüé. In the plan presented in *La Syrie Centrale*, the nave is shown as having six bays; but careful measurements make it plain that there were nine (Ill. 36). I could discover only one western portal. The entrances to the side chambers are both doorways

with door-caps which reproduce profiles that are known to belong to the fourth century. The Corinthian order prevails in the nave arcades and the responds at both ends are half columns, as at Serdjillâ and Medyleyyâ. The capitals are all well proportioned and are carved with much Classical spirit (Ill. 37); one or more of them show leaves that are slightly twisted and are the forerunners of the wind-blown capitals of the fifth century. The arrangement of the decorations of the apse are quite different from any that have been described hitherto in this chapter. The capitals of the half columns were set beside the rich angle capitals of the apse piers; above these latter was set the impost moulding of the half dome, which terminated against the nave arches on either side, and the face mouldings of the apse arch were brought down directly upon this. There are remnants of a fine mosaic pavement directly in front of the apse which will be described later in this volume.

*Dallôzâ.*⁵⁰

The church at Dallôzâ, which is also in the Djebel Rîhâ, is almost wholly ruined. In plan and general dimensions it closely resembles the church at Serdjillâ, but is without the pseudo-transepts.

*Dêr Sambil.*⁵¹

It lies northeast of Khirbit Hâss and is the same in plan as the fourth century church at Khirbit Hâss.

There was in all probability a fourth century church at Ruḥaiyeh⁵² in the ʿAlâ, for one of the lintels of the ruined sixth century church is dated 373/4 A.D.

6. CHURCHES OF NORTHEASTERN SYRIA.

THIS great region may be divided, for the purposes of architectural discussion, into three longitudinal strips, each marked off from the others by geological conditions which strongly effect its architectural productions through the medium of available materials. In the westernmost strip, — that adjoining the foothills of the Djebel Rîhâ, — basalt was the natural rock underlying the smooth rolling surface, but limestone was also available in the neighbouring foothills to the west, and, in certain cases, at spots where the limestone formation penetrates into the basalt region. In this strip the buildings are composed, for the most part, of a mixture of the two materials, although some buildings were erected exclusively in limestone or in basalt. It will be observed, in the

churches in which both kinds of stone were employed, that the structure usually follows the methods employed in the basalt region of the east, while the ornament partakes of the character of the limestone hills to the west, and is often executed in limestone. In the middle strip basalt is the underlying rock, and was to be quarried only by excavating deep pits which were often later converted into reservoirs for water. In this region we discover comparatively few churches built entirely of stone. Usually only the foundations of the walls, and the lower courses, to the height of a meter or less, together with the door frames, the interior supports and niches and, occasionally, the apse were constructed of basalt, while the main body of the walls was built of sun-baked brick. For this reason

⁴⁹ *S. C.* p. 100. Pls. 59, 61, *A. II.* pp. 82, 92.

⁵¹ *A. II.* p. 94, Fig. 32.

⁵⁰ *P. II.* B. p. 133, *Ill.* 151.

⁵² *P. II.* B. p. 24.



Ill. 37. Khirbit Hâss. Church, fallen capitals.

most of the churches are to be studied only in ground plans, which are generally well marked out in the mounds formed by disintegrated brick and in fallen structural details which were made of stone, and which are generally visible upon the surface, having fallen after the mud walls had disintegrated. It is in this middle strip that we find that small group of later buildings constructed of a combination of basalt and baked brick of such excellent manufacture that one is disposed to assume that they were imported from one of the famous brick-making centres of the Byzantine period. The eastern strip, so far as it has been explored, is provided with limestone and gypsum. These building stones of fine texture, and beautiful light colour, appear in the ruins at Isriyeh where mud-brick was also employed, and at Reşâfah, near the Euphrates, where gypsum seems to have been the chief, if not the only, building material used.

In this district of eastern *Euphratensis* the architectural forms, both in structure and in ornament, are closely allied with those developed in the limestone hills to the west and northwest, which we have grouped together and called Northern Syria. But, in the broad middle strip, where basalt was the only building stone, systems of construction and of decoration were developed which were peculiar to the district itself, influenced in no way by the forms developed in the basalt region of Southern Syria, and influenced only in minor details by the architectural forms developing so richly on the right hand and on the left. In the matter of wall construction, for instance, the builders of this district were the inferiors of the builders of Southern Syria, where precisely the same material was necessarily employed, being the only one available. They built their walls in a different manner making them double faced, of two stones in thickness, filled in with broken chips and clay; but, whereas the masons of Southern Syria employed whole courses of bonding

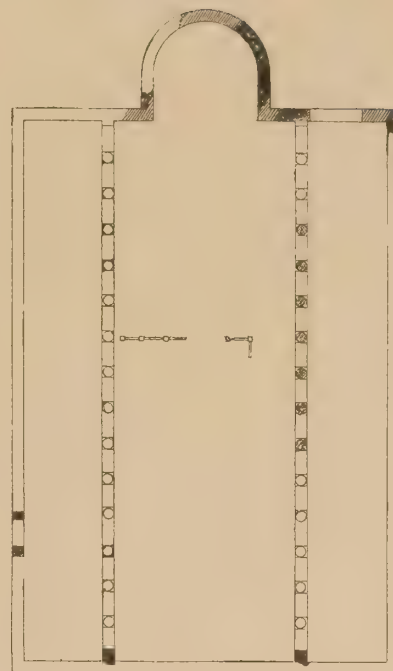
stones at regular intervals in better classes of their walls, the masons of Northeastern Syria were content with occasional single bonding stones. In their use of dressed stone, on the other hand, the northeastern builders excelled. They employed ponderous dressed blocks for the jambs and lintels of doorways, and showed great skill in the construction of piers and arches, using for the latter much larger and higher voussoirs than characterized most of the Christian arches of the South. In the general scheme of their ground plans the churches of *Euphratensis* follow the basilical type of the North. There are several churches which differ in no wise from the Northern buildings in this respect; but, in the majority, the columnar supports for the interior arches give way to tall piers of square, or nearly square, plan. These are usually not widely spaced, and are not to be confused with the rectangular piers carrying broad arches which are found in some of the later churches in both Northern and Southern Syria, but support arches proportioned more nearly like those ordinarily carried by columns. A peculiarity which is evident in many of these churches, from first to last, is the introduction of a single high transverse arch across the middle aisle at the westernmost bay, often supported by narrower arches over the side aisles. These features provided a sort of inner narthex, and often furnished supports for square towers at the western ends of the side aisles. There are also a few churches of central plan, with some indication of dominical vaults, which will be discussed in their proper place, and numerous departures from the normal type of basilical plans which show that the architects of this region, while not so versatile in the matter of plan as their fellow craftsmen of the South, displayed greater freedom than their immediate neighbours to the west and northwest. The stonecutters of this northern basalt region faced all the difficulties incident to the employment of a very hard

medium that those of Southern Syria were hampered by; nevertheless they accomplished much more in the solution of their problems in this field. This is particularly noticeable in their domestic architecture; but, in their churches as well, they showed much cleverness and skill in the invention of decorative motives which were practicable within the limitations of the material at hand. These decorative devices are generally in the nature of incised surface carving; but simple, projecting mouldings are not unknown, and these were often carved with surface patterns. Designs in low relief, such as crosses within circles, simple patterns of grapevine and crude representations of animal forms appear upon lintels and jambs of doorways, and even letters in relief were employed to bring out the decorative value of inscriptions.

The earliest dateable church in Northeastern Syria bears an inscription of Theodosius the Great and his son, Arcadius Caesar, and must therefore be dated between the years 383 and 395 after Christ.⁵³ But there is at least one church, and probably there are several others, which seem to belong to the earlier quarters of the century. The lack of uniformity in plan, however, makes it impossible to classify the earlier churches of this region, and ornamental details are not abundant enough to form a basis for classification according to date.

*Zebed. Basilica.*⁵⁴

The church which may be regarded as the earliest in this region is a large basilica in the extensive ruins of Zebed. It is one of those structures which was built in large part of mud-brick. The ruins of the building lie in the centre of a large rectangle formed by symmetrical mounds of clay which mark the remains of monastic buildings, all of mud-brick. The outlines of the church itself are traceable in similar mounds, along the crests of which are plainly seen the tops of the lower courses of the walls, which were of stone, and the bases of many of the interior columns. Its plan is unique among the churches of the region (*Ill.* 38), the nave being divided into a very wide middle aisle and two side aisles by two colonnades of fourteen columns each. The apse protrudes to its full diameter, and there are no remains of side chambers, but it is not impossible that the foundations for these might be found buried below the surface. The columns stood near together, and their bases are of almost Classical profile, but no capitals were found. The columns carried architraves of a profile similar to the cap moulding of a fine tomb near by which is dated in the year 337



Ill. 38. *Zebed. Basilica, plan.*

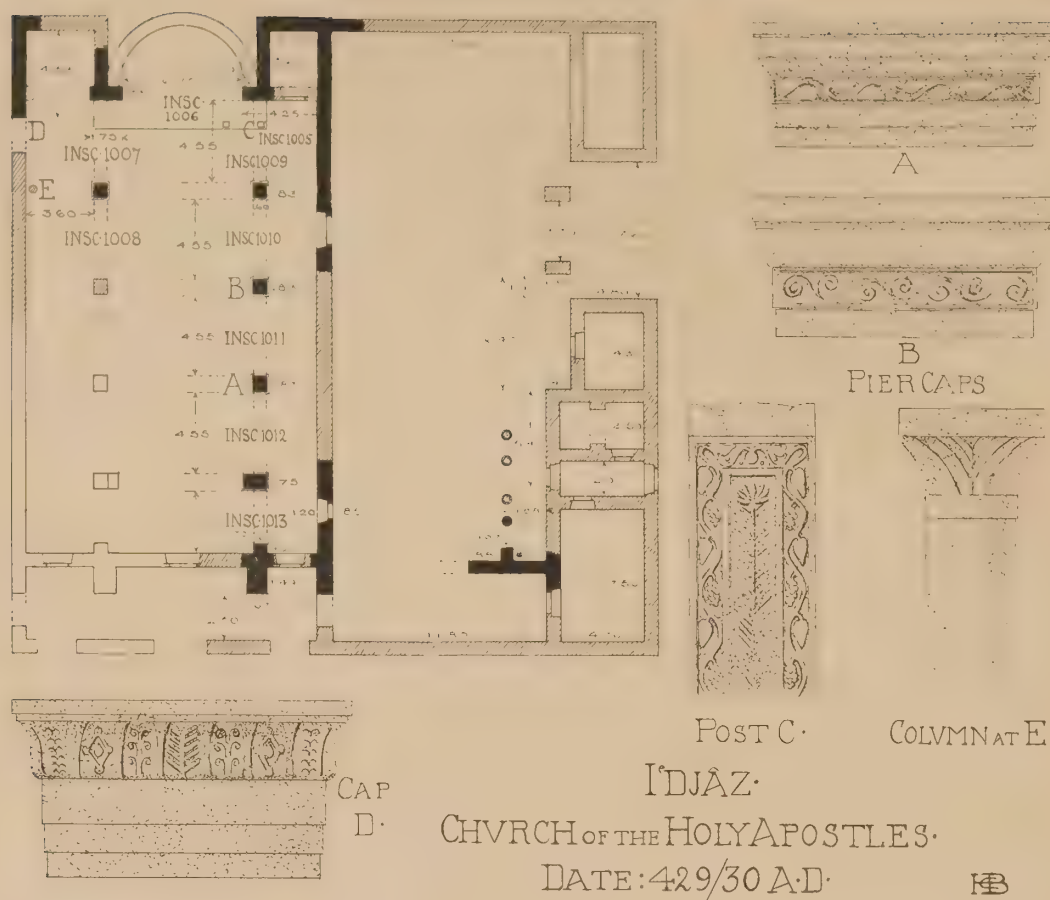
A.D. At the sixth column from the apse, on the north side, a stone parapet with posts and panels like those of a chancel rail, extends almost entirely across the middle aisle and then turns toward the west. The decoration of this parapet will be described in a chapter below; its inscriptions, some in Greek and some in Syriac, now claim our interest.

Upon one panel we find a Syriac inscription which says "Rabūlā made the throne". This name, which was very common in Syria, at once suggests the famous Bishop of Edessa, (412 to 435 A.D.), and the sixth century monk, Rabūlā, of the well known illuminated Gospels. It is significant that the bishop is known to have been a native of this region, having been born about 360 A.D. in Kinnesrīn, the Roman *Chalcis*, situated a few miles toward the west. Having been converted to Christianity about 385, and baptized by both Eusebius, bishop of Kinnesrīn, and by Acacius, bishop of Beroea, Rabūlā sold all that he had, and gave to the holy and the poor. Soon after this, he retired to a monastery near Kinnesrīn to become a monk. Here he remained until he became bishop of Edessa. It is very probable that the basilica of Zebed is the church of the monastery to which Rabūlā retired, and the throne referred to in the inscription is, with little doubt, one of his gifts to the church, made at the time of his conversion. The church was probably one of the first to be erected in Syria after the "Peace of the Church" in 313 A.D.

⁵³ *P.* III, insc. 1006.

⁵⁴ *A.* II, p. 301, IV, p. 50.

Early Churches in Syria



Ill. 39.

*Idjâz. Church of the Holy Apostles.*⁵⁵ 383—395 A.D.

There is not a more completely ruined church in all Syria than this one. It was built entirely of basalt, but no part of its structure is standing more than six feet above the soil, and most of it lies perfectly flat—a mass of confused details and loose building stones. Nevertheless, the fallen details are so disposed that it is possible to draw a very nearly complete restoration from them (Ill. 39). Only the east end remains in doubt. The walls of the side chambers are plainly visible, but one has to assume the curve of the apse amid a great mass of fallen and broken building blocks lying between them. Four rectangular piers on the south side of the nave and one on the north side are preserved to within a metre of their original height, and serve to show the disposition of the arches. Four of these on either side composed the main arcades of the nave, the fifth on either side was narrower than the others, and a great transverse arch was thrown across the middle aisle from one of the westernmost piers to the other. There were two entrances on the south side, one on the north and three at the west end where there are also remains of a narthex with three arched openings in front, and one at each end.

The piers were about three metres high, and the arches about 4.55 m. wide. One of the interesting features of this church is a series of incised inscriptions in Greek upon the archivolts of the arches. The better parts of seven of these were restored by copying the letters upon the fallen voussoirs. The inscription upon the apse arch is an honorific one set up for Theodosius and Arcadius, and reads quite like one of the old Pagan inscriptions in honor of emperors. The five inscriptions upon the arches of the south arcade, and that upon the easternmost arch of the north arcade, are in the form of prayers, or petitions, to the Holy Apostles; hence the name which we have given to the church. The voussoirs of the other arches lie buried in heaps of débris, only a few of them were recovered; but it is probable that the inscriptions were of the same import. The caps of the various piers are composed of a variety of simple curved or right-lined mouldings above two or three bands, one of which is ornamented with flat incised carving. Two of the posts of the chancel rail were found in place; their outer faces are adorned with flat surface carving, and one of them bears a date which is the equivalent of 429—30 A.D.

⁵⁵ P. II, B. pp. 84—86.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCHES OF THE FIFTH CENTURY: 1. INTRODUCTION: 2. CHURCHES OF SOUTHERN SYRIA: 3. CHURCHES OF NORTHERN SYRIA: 4. CHURCHES OF NORTHEASTERN SYRIA:

1. INTRODUCTION

THE fifth century was one of progress and development for the ecclesiastical architecture of Syria. It was, perhaps, the most important of the three centuries which comprise the history of Christian architecture in that country, for almost all the elements of construction, plan, and decoration, which were often combined in single edifices in the sixth century, were evolved and brought to perfection separately in buildings of the fifth. Most of the elements which had been developed in the churches of the fourth century were carried over into those of the succeeding century, some of them only for a time, others to be perpetuated until the end. New elements appear in every region; new forms of ground plan, new features in the superstructures, and new and more

elaborate schemes of ornament. The advance in matter purely structural was of minor consequence. Changes are noticeable in proportions, not only changes of the proportion of length to breadth in plan, and of height to width in façades, but also changes of the proportions of parts to the whole design, and of part to part. In general one might say that the Syrian churches of the fifth century are characterized by an accentuation of Oriental motives over those which were of purely Classical origin, and by a growing independence of all foreign influence. A rich symbolism, strongly Christian, pervades the increasingly elaborate ornament and gives it fresh value and significance. There are twelve dated churches which are of the greatest service in arranging the others in chronological order.

2. CHURCHES OF SOUTHERN SYRIA

IN the churches of the South we have again two principal classes: one which continues the general scheme of Class 1 in the fourth century, i.e. the hall church with a transverse system of supports, with slight modification, and another which takes the place of Class 2 in the former chapter, and substitutes a three-aisled plan with a *longitudinal* system of supports for the transverse system of quintuple arches which is gradually abandoned. Again we find types within the two classes, which represent slight variations from the general scheme.

CLASS I

Hall Churches

The churches of the fifth century in Southern Syria, which perpetuate the transverse system of supports, differ from those of the fourth century principally in their proportions, being shorter and wider. One type has a protruding apse, another an apse concealed by a straight east wall, a third has its transverse arches so widely spaced that a wooden roof was necessary. To this end a gable was erected upon each transverse

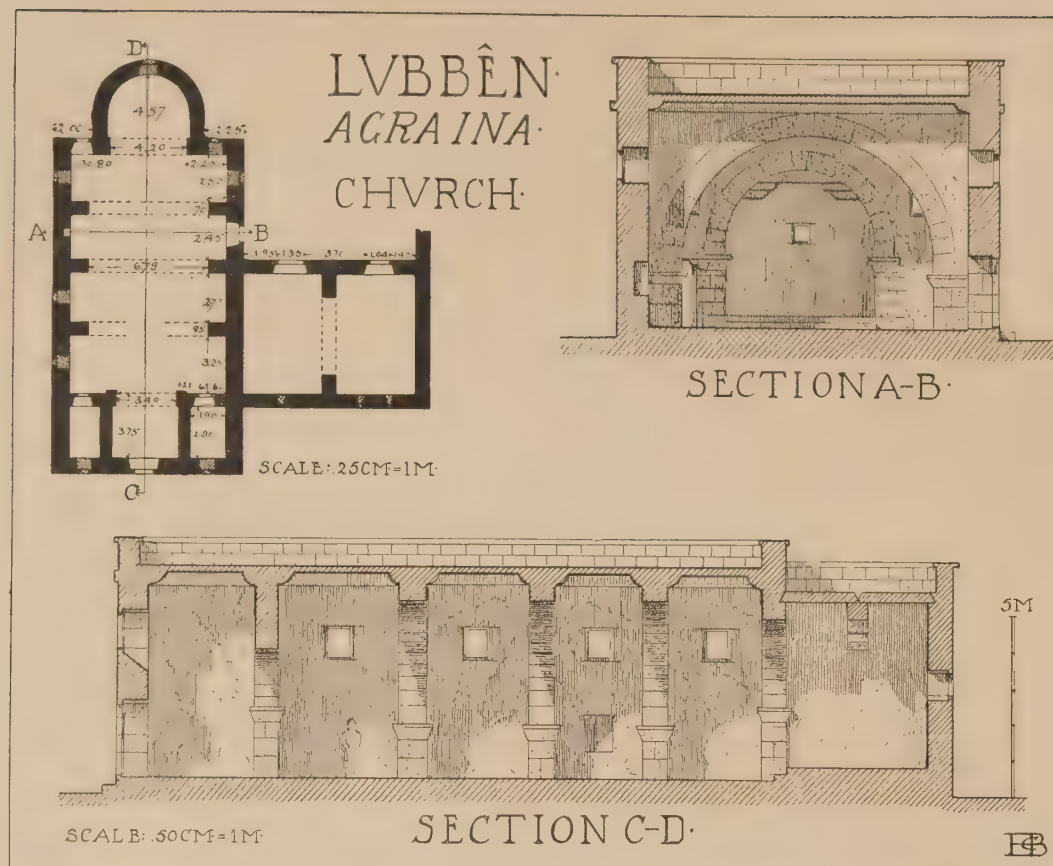
arch, and the timbers of the roof were laid from one of these to the next, as in a few churches in the North.

Type A

*Lubbên, Agraina. Church.*⁵⁶ 417 A.D.

The church of Lubbên in the Ledjâ, has four bays, a deep, protruding apse, and a narthex between side chambers, which were carried up in towers (*Ill.* 40). There is one exterior portal at the west end, one in the south wall, and one in the east end on the north side of the apse. The building is extraordinarily well preserved, only the westernmost of its interior arches and the upper storeys of its towers having fallen. Most of the slabs of the roof are in place. An inscription on the arch of the narthex gives the ancient name of the place as *Agraina*, and one in the apse gives the date 417 A.D. The apse was not covered by a half dome; the curved wall was carried straight up to the level of the crown of the apse arch, and a corbel was set in either side about half way back, a beam was then set between the two corbels, and stone slabs were laid upon this. The church is practically devoid of ornament.

⁵⁶ P. II, A. p. 419.



Ill. 40.

Other Churches.

Belonging to the same type we have a small chapel at Luddên⁵⁷ which has but three bays and no narthex, but which had a tower adjoining the northwest angle; a chapel outside the east wall at Umm idj-Djimâl,⁵⁸ which has two rooms adjoining the nave on the south. Both of these have only three bays. Of the same type, with four bays, there are two churches at il-Umtâ'iyeh, one which I have called church No. 1,⁵⁹ and the other which, according to an inscription, was perhaps dedicated to Saint George and Saint John.⁶⁰ Neither of these has a western doorway, but both have side portals. The former has a small room attached to its south side, the latter, a similar room at its northwest angle; also the East Church (No. 2) at Umm il-Ḳuttên,⁶¹ and the South Church (No. 6) at il-Umtâ'iyeh.⁶²

Type B

In the second type the apse is almost as broad as the nave but the east wall is straight, and the angles between it and the apse are solid masses of masonry.

*Ṣabḥah.*⁶³

This church has only three bays. Adjoining the

apse on the north is a square chamber connected with the apse by means of a narrow doorway and a long chamber extends along the entire north wall of the nave. These two chambers were only one storey high, and their flat roofs were much lower than the roof of the nave which was, of course, also flat, and of stone slabs.

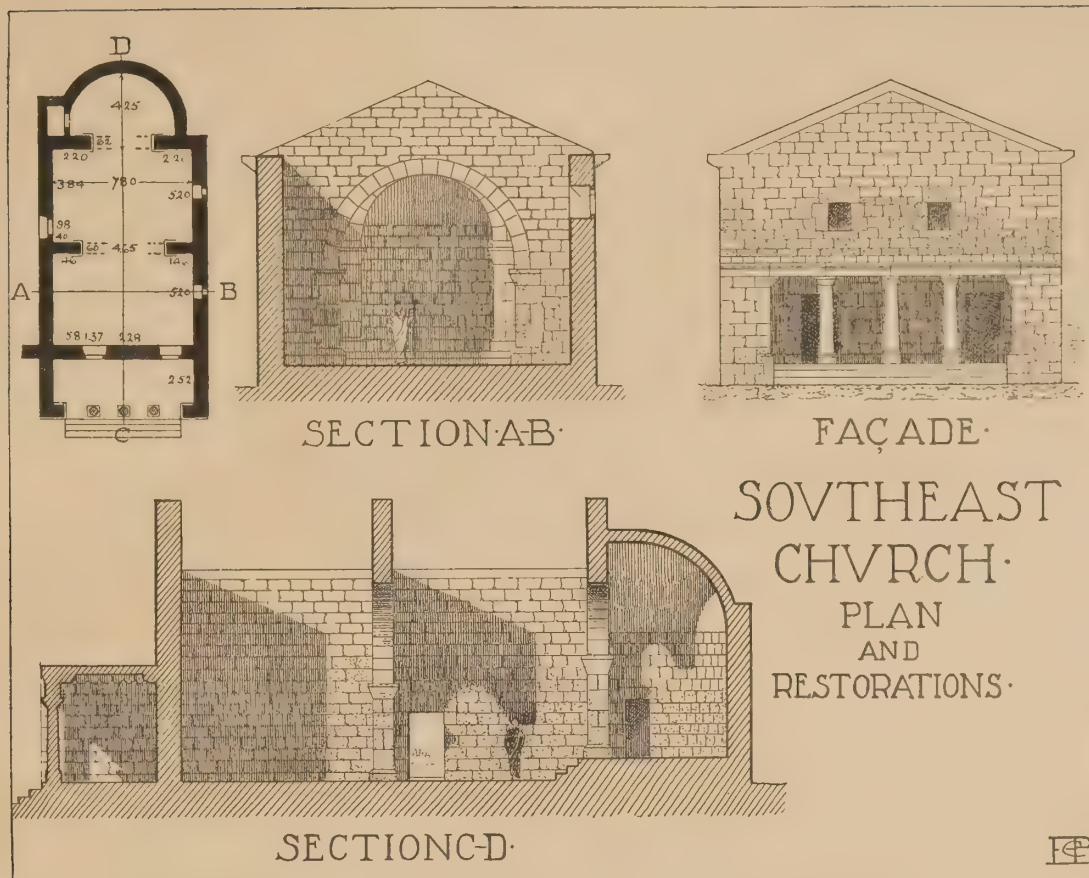
*Umm il-Ḳuttên. South Church*⁶⁴ (No. 1).

There are several churches in this large ruined town which in fact is one of the largest in the Southern Ḥaurân. One of them belongs to the type under discussion. It has four bays, a doorway in the west wall, and one in the south wall. On the south side, an arch in the second bay from the west end opens into a square tomb structure which appears to have been built before the church was erected. This then was, in all probability, a *μνημεῖον*, or memorial church.

*Type C**Umm idj-Djimâl. Southeast Church.*⁶⁵

The nave of this church is almost twice as long as it is wide, and yet it has but one transverse arch,

⁵⁷ *P.* II, A. p. 420, *Ill.* 362.⁵⁸ *Ibid.* p. 179, *Ill.* 153.⁵⁹ *Ibid.* p. 92, *Ill.* 71.⁶⁰ *Ibid.* p. 93, *Ill.* 74.⁶¹ *Ibid.* p. 138, *Ill.* 118.⁶² *Ibid.* p. 94, *Ill.* 76.⁶³ *Ibid.* p. 114, *Ill.* 91.⁶⁴ *Ibid.* p. 138, *Ill.* 117.⁶⁵ *Ibid.* p. 177, *Ill.* 151.



Ill. 41. *Umm idj-Djimâl.*

(*Ill. 41*) which means that the arch simply fulfilled the office of a girder for a double pitched roof of wood. The protruding, semicircular apse is almost as wide as the nave, but the chancel arch is comparatively narrow. A very small chamber was added to the north side of the apse. The church has two western doorways giving upon a narthex of three columns between returned end walls. The southern part of the Double Church⁶⁶ in the same place has three bays, but the transverse arches are so far apart that they could have supported only wooden roofs.

CLASS 2

Three-aisled Churches with the Longitudinal System

The longitudinal system of interior supports appears to have been introduced in the churches of Southern Syria during the fifth century. But the method of employing the longitudinal system in the South was very different from that in the North. In one of the southern types, piers carrying arches, in another, columns carrying arches, composed the arcades of the nave, but in neither of these types was a clearstorey superimposed upon the arches of the churches of this century. The side walls were built up as high as the crowns of the arches of the main arcades, flat roofs

of stone slabs were placed above the side aisles, and either flat roofs of stone or gabled roofs of wood were set upon the same level as the aisle roofs. The flat roof of stone slabs covering all these aisles developed an elaborate system of corbeling. These corbel courses, usually two, but often three courses deep, were set upon the level walls above the arches, projecting on both sides, and upon the aisle walls, projecting inward in order to shorten the span of the roofing slabs. The types here are grouped, for convenience, according to ground plan.

Type A

The churches of this type have a projecting apse without side chambers, and their naves are divided by two rows of three arches carried upon piers, two on either side with pilaster piers at either end.

Umm idj-Djimâl.

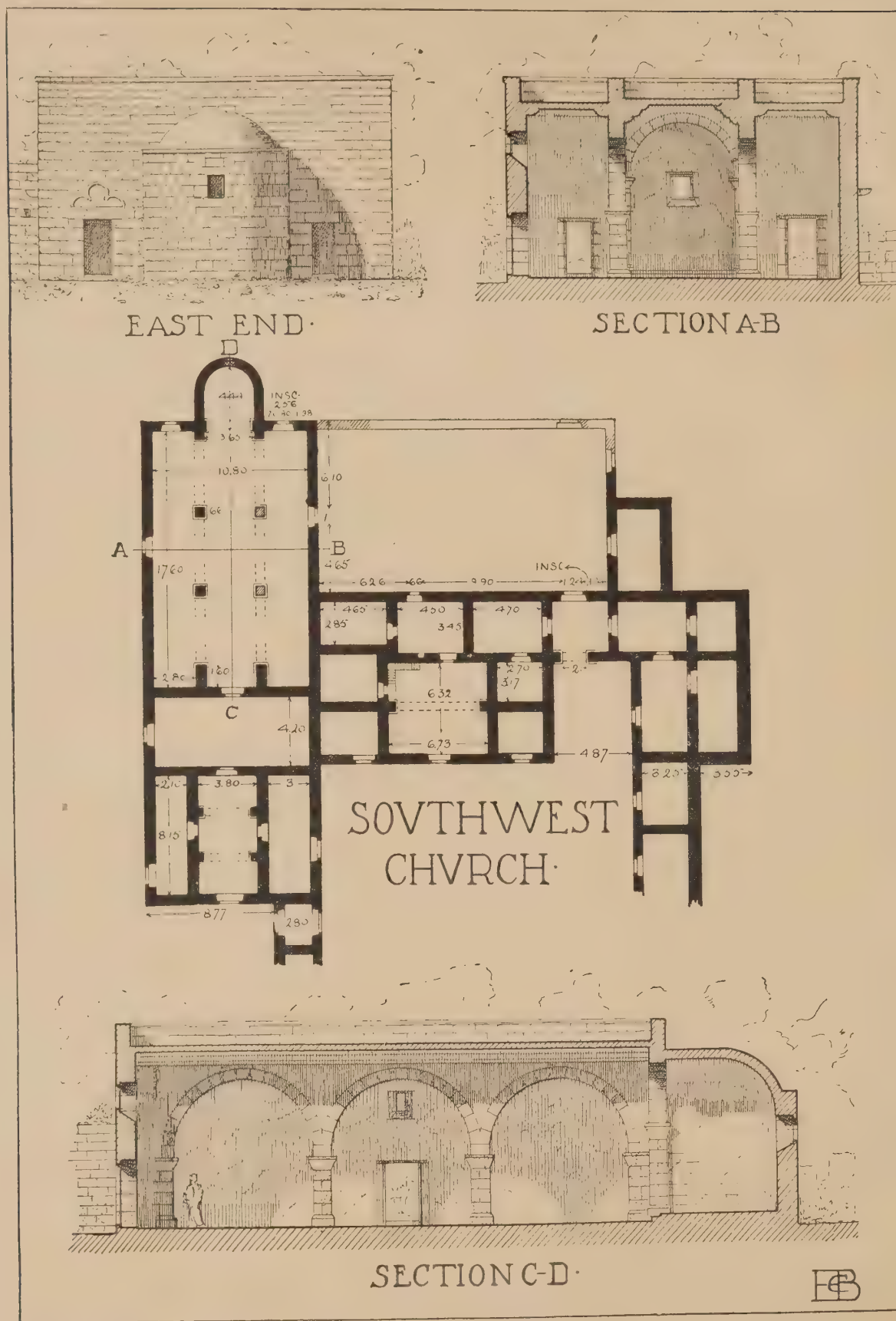
The North Church,⁶⁷ and the Northeast Church⁶⁸ in this city of seventeen churches, both belong to this type. They are almost identical in plan and in superstructure (*Ill. 206*). Both have deep apses which are a trifle wider than the middle aisle, and both are roofed throughout in stone slabs. The Southwest Church⁶⁹

⁶⁶ *P. II, A. p. 179, Ill. 154.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid. p. 184, Ill. 162.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid. p. 186, Ill. 163.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid. p. 183 f.*



in the same city presents a similar plan of slightly different proportions (*Ill.* 42). The three aisles are of nearly equal width, and the apse is consequently narrower. This church has doorways in the eastern ends of both aisles and a doorway in each of the other three walls. The piers of the nave arcades are tall and slender and the arches are very broad, giving an effect of lightness to the interior.

Other Churches.

The church of the Monastery at Umm il-Ḳuṭṭên,⁷⁰ the church of the Monastery of St. George at Sameh,⁷¹ and church No. 3. at il-Umtā'iyeh⁷² all belong to this type, but their proportions are more nearly like the first example described above. With the exception of Sameh these churches had three western portals, and the first had a narthex of three arches supported by piers and closed at both ends. The last shows a lintel with simple relief carving in the form of a wreath with sprays of grapevine.

Type B

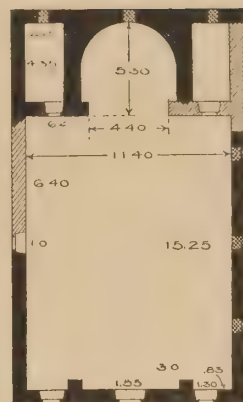
The second type is characterized by the addition of side chambers to the apse. Otherwise the plan is the same; the middle aisle is only slightly wider than the side aisles, and is separated from them by two rows of three wide arches carried by two piers and two pilaster piers on either side. The roof of the middle aisle may be of stone or of wood.

Kaṣr il-Bâ'iq. ⁷³ Church, 412 A.D.

The chapel of the fortress at this place is a good example of this type, and very fortunately it may be dated by the inscription recording the date of the erection of the fortress; for the chapel is an integral part of the greater structure, and is surrounded on all sides but the west by barrack rooms and other divisions of the castle. The west portal opens upon a small paved court. In the original publication of this church, I restored the middle aisle with a wooden roof, but it is quite as likely that it was roofed with slabs of stone. This aisle is 4.40 m. wide.

Umtā'iyeh. Churches No. 2 ⁷⁴ and No. 5. ⁷⁵

These two churches conform to type B in plan (*Ill.* 43). The south side chamber of the former has been enlarged, and a recess has been added at the east end of the south aisle. The apses have different proportions with reference to the width of the church.



IL-VMTA'YEH.
CHVRCH N°5.

Ill. 43

Both have three western portals. The roofs of the middle aisles of both churches were probably of wood.

Type C

This type, which is not a common one among the churches of Southern Syria, is distinguished by having columns for the supports of its nave arcades. Their plans and superstructure differ in certain details. One example has a projecting apse, a nave of three bays and a roof of wood over the middle aisle; another has an apse between side chambers, a nave of four bays and stone roofs throughout; while a third has chambers flanking its apse, a nave of six bays and the unique feature of galleries over the side aisles.

Umm idj-Djimâl.

The northern unit of the Double Church⁷⁶ in the Christian-Arabic metropolis is the example with a projecting apse (*Ill.* 207). Its middle aisle is extremely wide, and was roofed by a simple timber roof; its side aisles are disproportionately narrow, and have roofs of stone slabs. The two columns in either arcade are slender and carried arches of extraordinary width. They are of the Doric order, very well proportioned. The capitals have two bands in the abacus and a right-lined echinus. The arches are raised upon very slender stilt blocks. The Klaudianos Church⁷⁷ in the same place was named from an inscription on the main portal which gives the name of one Klaudianos and that of his brother Kaioumos without any further explanation of their connexion with the building. This church (*Ill.* 44) has a deep, narrow apse between side chambers, a nave divided into three aisles of nearly

⁷⁰ *P.* II, A. p. 139, *Ill.* 120.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* pp. 83—86, *Ill.* 65. The seventh century inscription on a lintel from a doorway of the monastery has no bearing upon the date of the church, and probably was carved upon an old lintel when repairs were made in the seventh century.

⁷² *Ibid.* p. 93, *Ill.* 73.

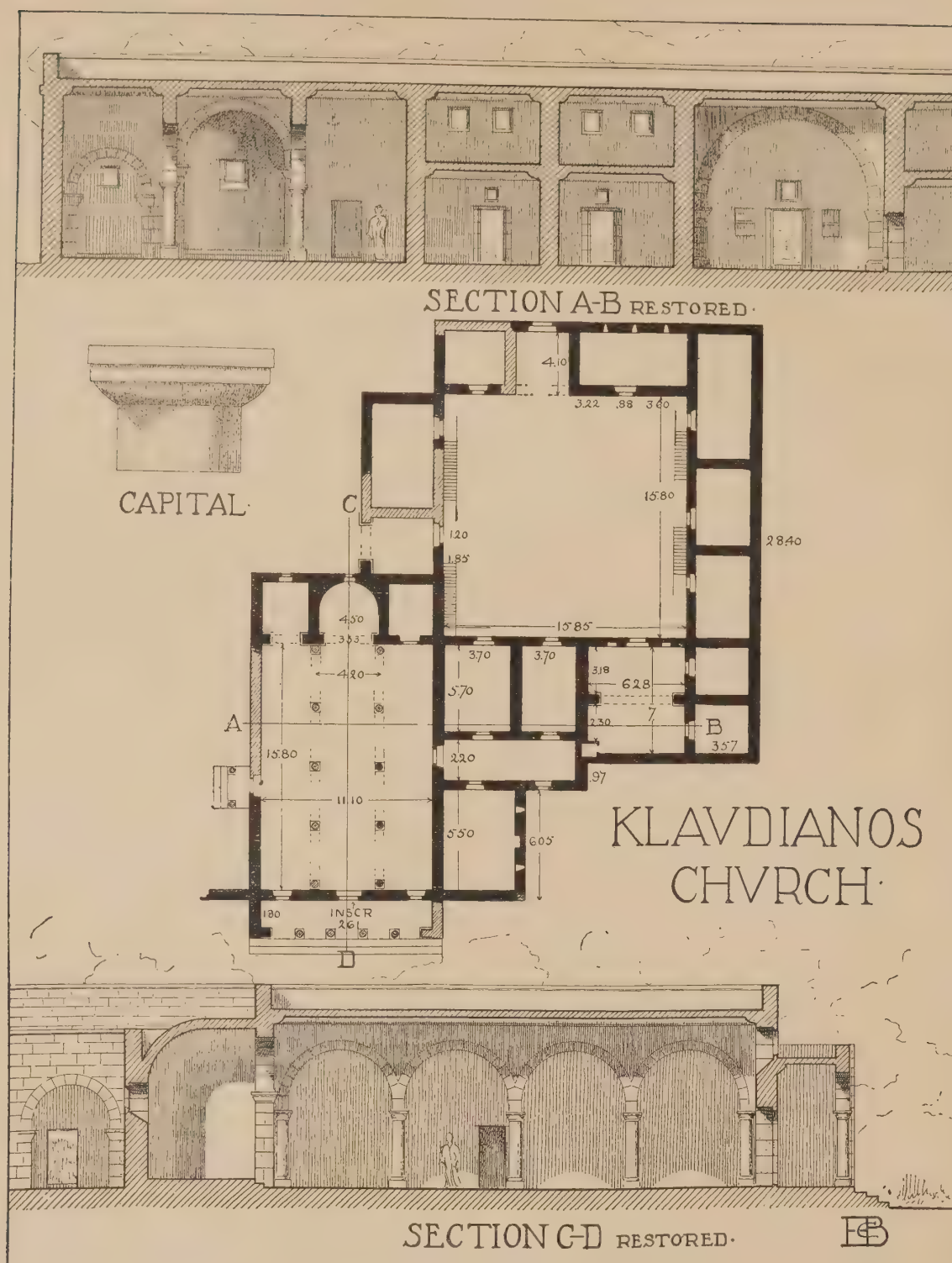
⁷³ *Ibid.* p. 81, *Ill.* 61.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* p. 92, *Ill.* 72.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* p. 94, *Ill.* 75.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* p. 179, *Ill.* 154.

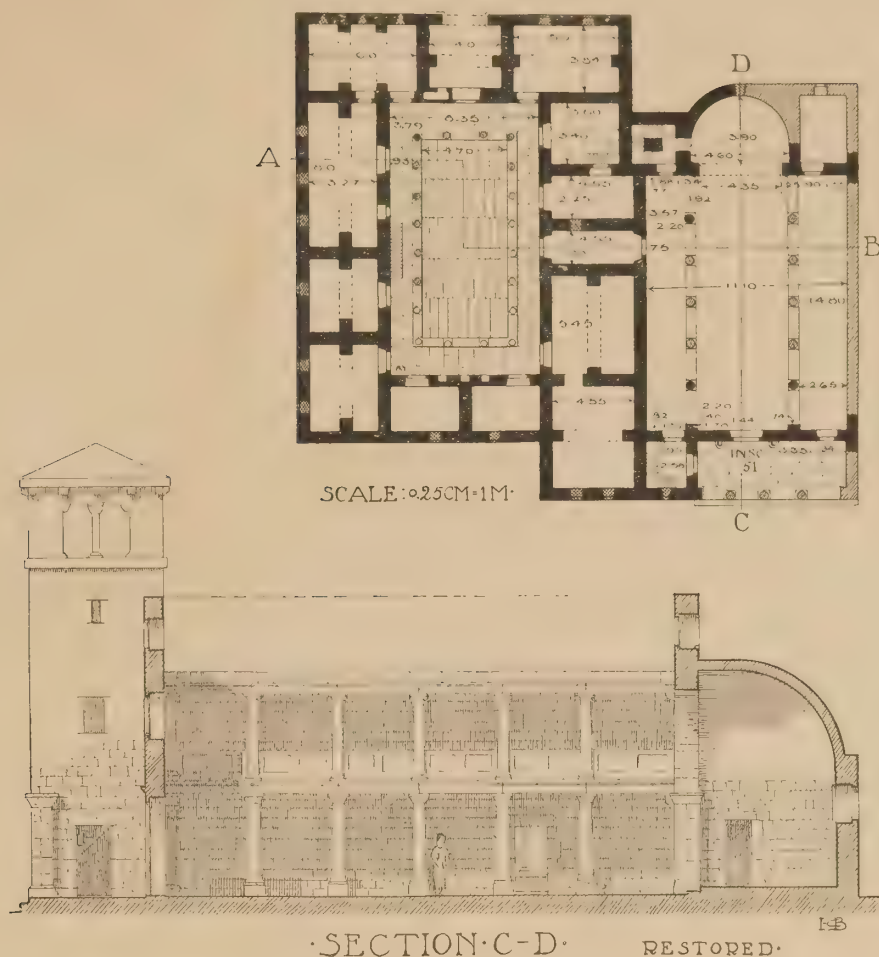
⁷⁷ *Ibid.* p. 189 f.



Ill. 44. Umm idj-Djimâl.

equal width by two rows of three columns each carrying arches, three west portals, and a porch, or narthex, of four columns between returned end walls. There are free standing columns, in place of pilaster piers, at the ends of the arcades. The northernmost side chamber opens upon the aisle by means of an arch, and was therefore probably the prothesis; the other chamber has an ordinary doorway. A single

portal in the north wall was protected by a little porch of two columns; one in the south wall led into a passage connecting the church with residential buildings extensive enough to have formed a small monastery. The columns of the interior are Doric, like those of the preceding church. The arches were broad and high. The roofs were of stone throughout and all on one level.



Ill. 45. *Umm is-Surab. Church of SS. Sergios and Bacchos, plan and section. Date: 489 A.D.*

*Umm is-Surab, Church of SS. Sergios and Bacchos,*⁷⁸ 489 A.D.

This very unusual building was attached to the south side of a small, but compact and symmetrical group of monastic buildings which are to be discussed later in these pages. It is unique in many ways. The plan (Ills. 45 and 90) shows an apse between side chambers, a nave of six bays divided by columns, and a western porch of three columns, closed by a wall on the south and by a square chamber on the north. The north side chamber beside the apse is smaller than the other; it was connected with the apse, and contains a staircase. It was carried up to form a tower which rose fully three storeys above the church roof. The chamber at the north end of the west porch also contains a stair, and had a high tower above it. Thus there were two towers on the north side of the church; the eastern tower is well preserved, the western has collapsed. Three of the ten interior columns are standing. They are of the Doric order and have bases like

inverted Doric capitals with a round abacus. They carried architraves with mouldings at the top, in profile a cyma reversa below a fascia. Above this order was a second order, of Ionic columns, which carried triply banded architraves crowned by a bevel and a fascia. The bases of these columns are of Tuscan form. The capitals show an echinus carved with well executed egg-and-dart, but the volutes are of the usual flat Christian variety which has no channels. Between these columns were placed the panelled slabs of a parapet. There was no clearstorey. The entire roof was of wood. Upon the lintel of the middle portal at the west end is the inscription which gives the date 489 A.D., the names of the two Saints to whom the church was dedicated, and the names Ameras and Kyros, sons of Ulpianos, who erected the church.⁷⁹ Saints Sergios and Bacchos were two young Syrians who were martyred for the Christian faith in the reign of Galerius Maximus. These two, but particularly Saint Sergios, as we shall see, became the most popular of saints among the Christians of Arabia and Syria.

⁷⁸ P. II, A. p. 95.

⁷⁹ P. III, A. insc. 51.

3. CHURCHES OF NORTHERN SYRIA

THE fifth century churches of Northern Syria present a greater variety of ground plans than those of the fourth, so that it becomes convenient to discuss them under three separate types; A, those which adhere to the simple basilical plan of the preceding century; B, those in which four rectangular piers, two on each side of the nave, carrying three broad arches, take the place of numerous columns carrying narrow arches; and C, the small undivided chapels. There are moreover variations of plans within the three types. In one case the apse is permitted to protrude, and the side chambers, retaining their old places at the ends of the aisles, flank a deep platform, or bema, like a rudimentary choir, in front of the apse. In other churches a narthex, of one kind or another, is introduced; these are made up either of a free standing porch of six piers or columns, or of four columns between end walls, occasionally of a broad arch between two western towers. Porches of two columns supporting gable roofs of stone often appear at the side doors of the naves. With the beginning of the century a larger proportion of round topped windows was used, even in the clearstorey where the number of the openings is gradually increased. These round topped windows were not truly arched, but have arcuated lintels. By the middle of the century the rectangular windows had practically disappeared. An arched opening for the prothesis becomes more and more common; this arch still appears, from time to time, as a three-piece lintel. Baptisteries, joined onto the churches, are found for the first time in this century.

In the matter of ornament, the development was gradual and constant, beginning with the simple schemes of carved decoration which were evolved during the fourth century, and blossoming into great richness before the last quarter of the century had closed. The interior ornament was at first confined to the capitals of the columns, the moulded caps of apse piers and responds, the archivolt of the chancel arches, and the impost mouldings of the half domes, though these latter were often omitted, and the former were occasionally left plain. As in the former century, the caps of the apse piers are usually of some foliate design, but the caps of responds are more frequently moulded. The strongly Classical angle caps of the apse piers, and the equally Hellenistic compound caps which crowned an apse pier and the half column respond beside it, both practically disappear. The exterior

ornament, aside from the usual cornices, is at first massed upon the portals, particularly the side portals, and still more particularly upon the eastern side portals which were the men's entrances. Later on, windows also are given mouldings, then the window mouldings are joined up by connecting mouldings, eventually moulded string courses are added, and finally the ends of the mouldings of doorways and windows are twisted into those volutes, or scrolls, which are perhaps the most characteristic feature of North Syrian ornament. The carving of mouldings with various patterns also became common, and the introduction of bands or friezes of intricate carving among the mouldings. Cusping was also applied to the outer bands of groups of mouldings. In fact, before the year 500, every decorative feature that is characteristic of the architecture of Northern Syria had appeared in one church or another.

Type A

There is a group of four churches situated close together in the northern end of the Djebel Bārishā, and belonging to the first two decades of the fifth century, all of which would be marked as having been designed by the same architect, even if there were not evidence in inscriptions which points to the same conclusion. There is an extraordinary resemblance among them, in plan and superstructure, but particularly is ornamental details. They are the East Church at Bābiskā, the East Church at Ksēdjbeh; the Church of Saint Paul and Moses at Dār Kītā, and the Church of the Great Convent at Ḳaṣr il-Benāt.

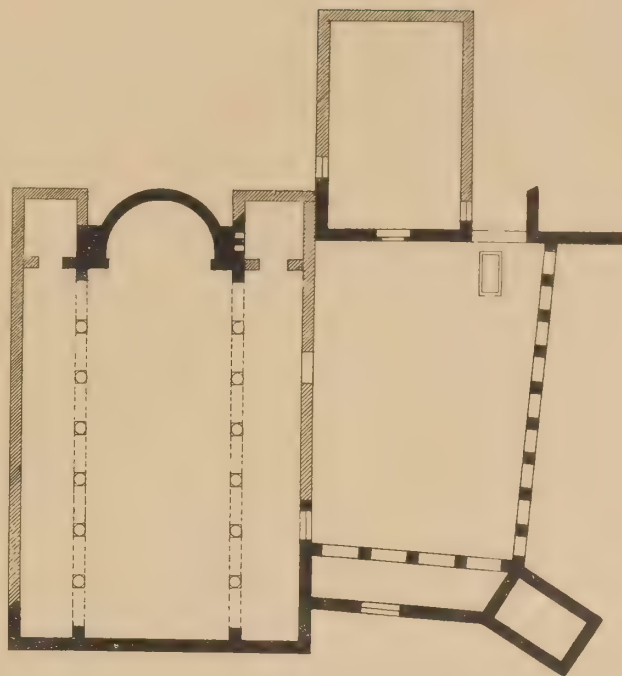
Bābiskā, East Church, ⁸⁰ 401 A.D.

The earliest church of this group is the larger of two churches at the important ruined town of Bābiskā. The church is perhaps to be regarded as belonging to the last decade of the fourth century; for a lintel, dated 390 A.D., was found at one end of the atrium on the south side of the church, bearing the name of the architect, M. Kyris, whose name appears also on the lintel of the eastern portal in the south wall, in an inscription dated 401, and who was certainly the architect of the building. The earlier lintel, however, appears to have fallen from a pair of jambs at the east end of the atrium, but this may not have been its original place. This Markianos Kyris, as he is named in the inscription of 401 A.D., was not only an architect

⁸⁰ P. II, B. pp. 165—169.

τεχνίτης but also, in all probability the presbyter, M. Kyris, of the inscription dated 390 A.D.⁸¹ The name of Eusebis, a deacon, is mentioned after that of the architect. Another inscription dated 389 A.D. carved upon the lintel of a house, or shop, near by, states that Eusebis also was an architect.⁸² A handsome house lintel in the neighbouring town of Dâr Ẹitā bears an inscription with the name of Eusebios, architect. Two other inscriptions in the same place mention Flavios Eusebios, son of Kyrillas, as a builder, κτιστής 340—350 A.D.,⁸³ and as a "senator" (?). These Christian Syrians seem often to have had difficulty in inscribing, or having inscribed, their native, or even their Greek names, in Greek characters, for the most educated among the ancients were not accustomed to seeing their names written, much less graven in stone. Eusebios and Eusebis are undoubtedly the same name; and it is not impossible that the two forms employed in the above inscriptions refer to the same man, or perhaps to father and son. It is possible that M. Kyris of the two other inscriptions is the same person as Kyros, the architect of the Church of Saint Paul and Moses at Dâr Ẹitā, named in an inscription dated 418 A.D., and Kyrios the architect of the church at Ẹaṣr il-Benāt, for the elaborate lintels upon which these inscriptions are carved, are not only almost identical, but are of a unique type, and the name itself is unusual. All three churches are situated within a radius of five miles from Dâr Ẹitā.

The church under discussion is in a sadly ruinous condition; but its fallen details have not been disturbed. The nave had seven bays (*Ill.* 46), the east end resembled that of the church of Fāfirtīn, dated 372 A.D., in that the curve of the apse was permitted to show between the side chambers; but the north chamber opens upon the aisle by means of an arch, the pier caps of which are moulded details taken from some Pagan temple, and bearing inscriptions dated 143 A.D. The only portals are those of the south side. The middle aisle is wider in proportion to the side aisles than the middle aisles of the fourth century churches are, and this gives a broader relation of width to length to the whole nave, which becomes common in the fifth century. The capitals of the interior were apparently uniformly of basket form, being inverted, steep, truncated cones carved with vertical flutings, beneath square abaci (*Ill.* 47), like some of the capitals in the „Cathedral” of Brād and the same as the capital at Ksēdjbeh. It is quite pos-



Ill. 46. Bābiskā. East Church, plan.

sible that the architect was familiar with that church, or had worked upon it. The exterior ornament was confined to the portals in the south aisle wall and to the windows of the west end. The ornament of the fallen east portal in the south side is exceedingly rich, and was exactly reproduced in the corresponding portal in the Church of Saint Paul and Moses at Dâr Ẹitā, a photograph of a cast of which appears in *Ill.* 50. The moulded windows of the west end probably belong to a rebuilding; if not, they are the earliest moulded windows in Syria, with a definite date.

*Ksēdjbeh, East Church,*⁸⁴ 414 A.D.

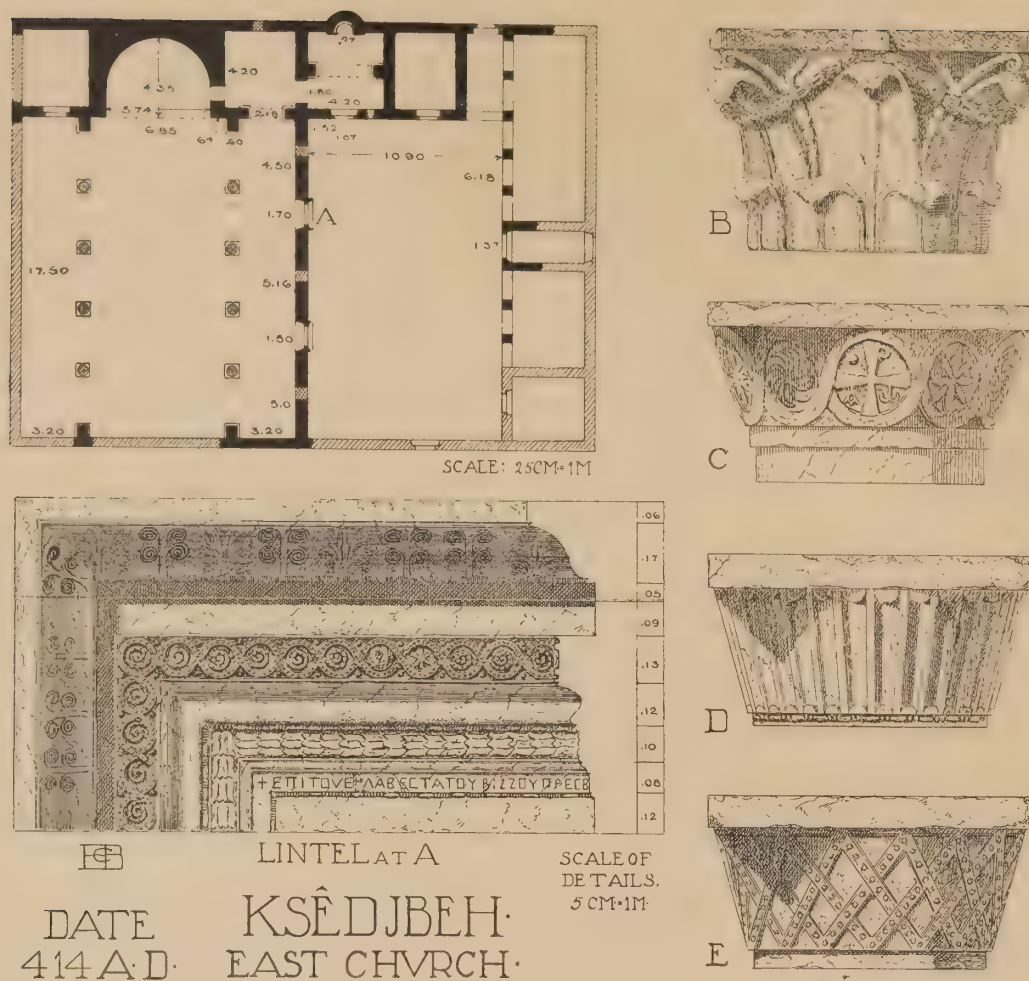
In general proportions, the church of Ksēdjbeh follows the church at Bābiskā; and its only portals are those in the south wall; but the nave has only five bays, the east wall is straight, and the south chamber has an arched entrance upon the aisle. This chamber, which must have been the prothesis, is directly connected with the apse, and has a second, arched opening to the south, which leads into a small baptistery with a diminutive apse protruding toward the east, a single transverse arch, and a portal toward the west. The capitals of the interior columns (*Ill.* 47 B, C, D, E,) are of four varieties which apparently were placed two and two on opposite sides of the middle aisle. Two of the capitals are of the inverted truncated cone, or

⁸¹ *A.* III, 67.

⁸² *A.* III, 66.

⁸³ *P.* III, 1074. 1075. Eusebios is named in another, undated inscription from Dâr Ẹitā (*P.* III, 1089) as an architect. Flavios Eusebios, son of Kyrillas was "the buyer and builder," not the architect.

⁸⁴ *P.* II, B. p. 158.



III. 47.

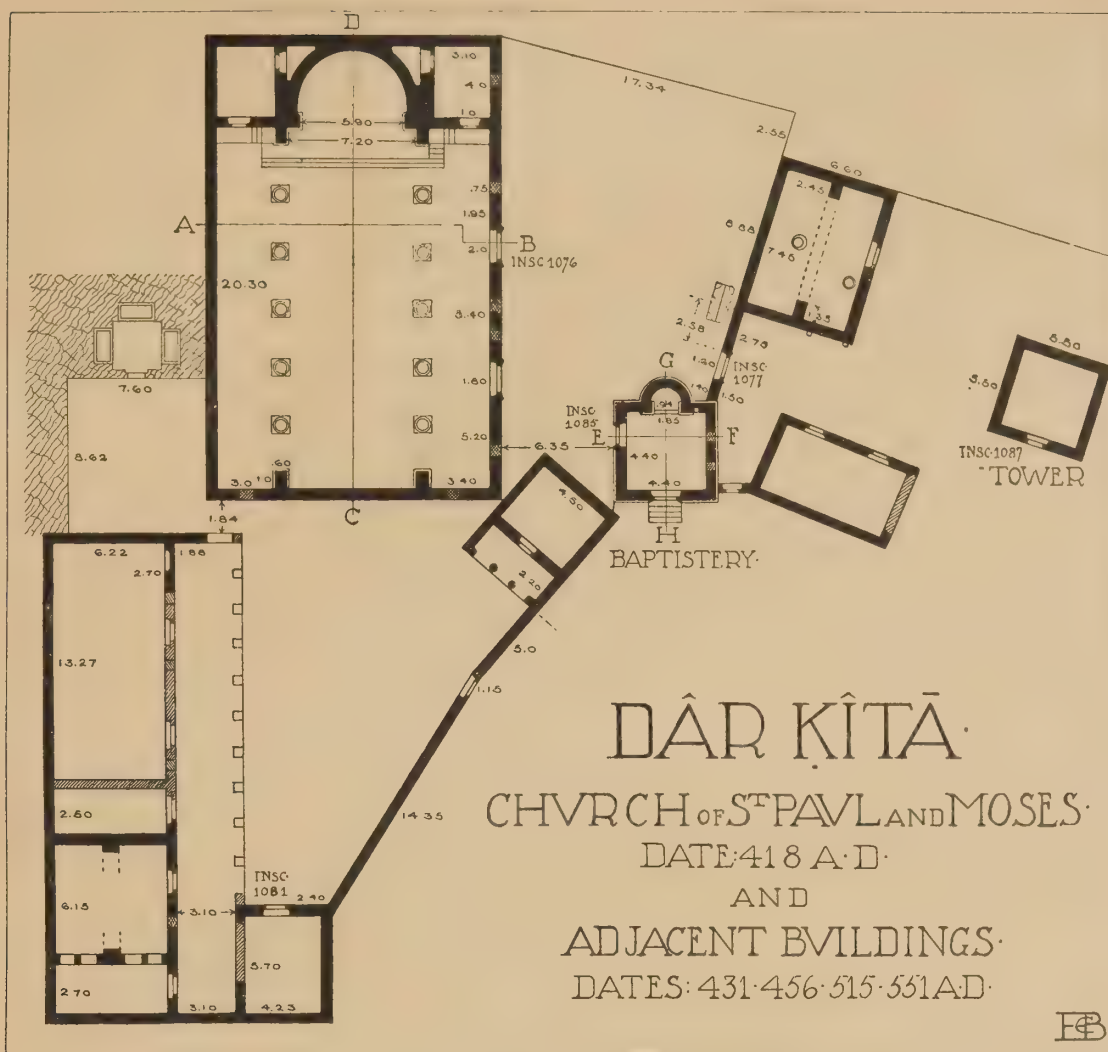
basket type, variously carved, one pair with interwoven chevrons studded with nail-head, another with fillets interlaced about symbolical discs, and a third with perpendicular grooves like the capitals in the church at Bābiskā. The fourth pair have the Corinthian form, with smooth leaves of arums in place of the fretted acanthus. Very small volutes at the angles spring from slender caulicoli. Garlands of small leaves and flowers are draped from the middle of one side of the abacus to the middle of the next side, passing beneath the curling top of the large angle-leaves and the volutes. The abacus is not moulded, but is decorated with minute incised chevrons, not unlike the Romanesque dog-tooth. The exterior decoration is again massed upon the two south portals, both of which are in place. The east portal on this side (III. 47 A) in the elaborate profile of its mouldings, its bands of varied carving, and its carved hood moulding, is a reproduction of the corresponding portal in the church at Bābiskā, and finds another duplicate in the Church of Saint Paul and Moses at Dār Kītā, illustrated below

(III. 50). The inscription upon the lintel mentions the name of the presbyter Bizzos, and gives the name of the architect as Kyrillas, which I believe to be a diminutive form of Kyris, Kyros, or Kyrios, who was the architect of three other churches of this group. If Kyrillas was not the same person, he was the most careful copyist of his day, as is shown by his portal decoration and two of his capitals.

*Dār Kītā, Church of Paul and Moses,*⁸⁵ 418 A.D.

This church, being in a far better state of preservation than the others, may be taken as the representative of the group (III. 48 and 49). The lower storey of its west wall, both of its side walls, two side chambers, and the lower courses of its half dome, are still in place. The interior columns and arches have fallen, bringing the clearstorey down with them, and, at some early period, the bases of the columns in the western half of the nave were removed, and the débris was all piled up in the eastern half, to clear a space for ploughing. The proportions of the plan follow those

⁸⁵ P. II, B, pp. 178—182.

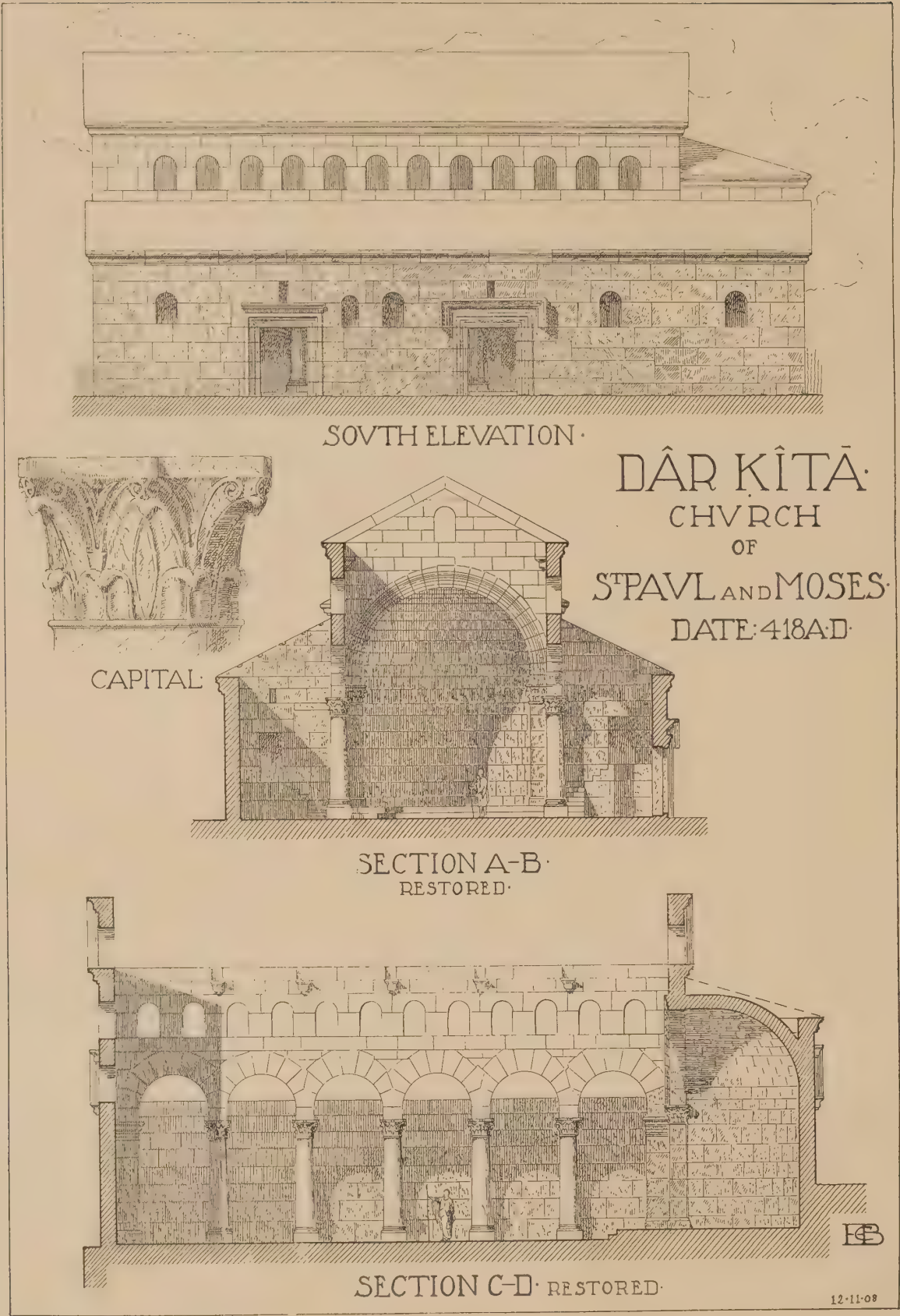


Ill. 48.

of Bābiskā. The nave has six bays, the east wall is straight, and the only portals are those of the south aisle. Both side chambers have doorways upon the aisles, and the floors of both are somewhat elevated above the level of the nave, partly owing to the fact that the lower parts of this end of the church were cut out of the natural rock. The general proportions of the superstructure, as shown by elevations and sections, reproduce those of the foregoing structures; the apse is broad, and the clearstorey low, and the main arches well proportioned. The capitals of the interior columns appear to have been uniformly Corinthian, of a smooth leaved form, not unlike that of the Corinthian columns at Ksédjbeh (Ill. 47 B), without the garlands. The caps of the responds are moulded, those of the apse piers are composed of Corinthian acanthus leaves very well executed. The apse arch is moulded, but not returned at the ends. The apse has no impost moulding. All of the windows of the aisles

have arcuated lintels, and similar details lying in the nave show that the clearstorey windows had the same form. The two south portals are supplied with frame mouldings, that on the right (Ill. 50) is decorated with bands of carved ornament, and is provided also with a hood moulding carved with alternating acanthus leaves and honeysuckles in relief. The outermost band of the frame mouldings is carved with a delicate pattern of interlacing, studded fillets; within this is a deep cyma recta, then comes a band of bay, or laurel leaves between two bead-and-reel mouldings, and then two plain fascias separated by a string of lentoid beads. The two bands upon the lintel bear the inscription which reads: *One God and his Christ and the Holy Spirit. A vow to Paul and Moses: Diodoros presbyter: Kyros architect: 25th. of Loös, in the 466th. (year)* (August, 418 A.D.).⁸⁶ The ornamental features of this portal, and of the three contemporary portals which are almost identical with it, are significant. Their unique

⁸⁶ A. III, insc. 58.





Ill. 50. *Dâr Kîṭā. Church of St. Paul and Moses, doorway in South wall.*

character, shown in the hood moulding, and in the ornamental bands, is important, coming at so early a date. There are no other portals of the same century which in any way resemble these in decorative details, and there are only two in the whole history of Syrian architecture, both of them a century and a half later, according to inscriptions, which resemble them at all. One of these, in the East Church at Bākirḥā, which is identical, may be of the same early date as the others, and by the same hand, depending upon the rendering of two different inscriptions, as is described elsewhere.⁸⁷ The other, dated 537 A.D., in the Church of Saint Sergius in Dâr Kîṭā, is manifestly a poor copy of one of Kyros' portals in the same town (Ill. 242). We have seen portals with frame mouldings in the fourth century, e.g. the south portal of Bā'ûdeh, dated 392 A.D. The west portal of the „Cathedral” of Brād is a Christian reproduction of a Pagan temple portal, door-cap and all. In the early fifth century church of

Kal'at Kalôtā (Page 56), which was erected among the ruins of a Pagan temple, a doorway from the older shrine was reset. But here we have a new treatment, an interesting combination of Classical and Oriental motives; for the foliage of the ornamental bands and upon the hood mouldings is full of Hellenistic feeling, executed in a plastic rather than a colouristic manner, while the interlaces are very Oriental in effect. The spirit of the work marks a distinct and conscious break with the Classical past, and an intelligent use of native patterns which had probably never disappeared from the textile ornament of Syria.

*Ḳaṣr il-Benât, Convent Church,*⁸⁸ Cirç. 420 A.D.

Kyros' fourth church, which he built in fulfillment of a vow, and in which he was finally buried, is the largest of this group. The scale is somewhat enlarged, but the proportions remain about the same as in the churches by this same architect at Bābiskā and Dâr

⁸⁷ A. II, pp. 209—210.

⁸⁸ A. II, p. 104 f. P. II, B. p. 214 f.



Ill. 51. *Kaşr il-Benât. Church of Convent, interior looking East.*

Ḳita. There are seven bays in the nave (Ill. 96), a west portal which may have been added, and two entrances in each of the side aisles. The side chambers opened into the aisles by means of doorways; that on the north has also a doorway toward the convent. The bema is considerably elevated, having been cut out of the solid rock. The lower storey of the west end of the nave, one half of the south wall, the two side chambers and the apse wall, including the lower courses of the half dome, are all in place. The details of the interior arches and of the clearstorey, and those of the north wall are lying as they fell. The interior ornament is rather richer than that of the other churches designed by the same architect. The mouldings of the apse arch (Ill. 51) have a more elaborate profile, terminating in a heavy cyma recta which is beautifully carved with anthemions, and the fascias are separated by slender bead-and-reel carving; the whole design of the archivolt resembling the lower member of a Classical arcuated entablature, although the mouldings are not returned at their springing. The impost of the half dome is emphasized by a rich moulding set on the level of the caps of the apse piers, which are very beautiful examples of Corinthian design, full of Classical spirit. The caps of the responds are set a little lower than the caps of the apse piers; they are moulded in a delicate profile. The capitals of the nave arcade are

of uniform design, with one exception, having the garlanded Corinthian form with uncut leaves introduced by Kyros in the capitals at Ksêdjbeh, but being slightly more spreading in shape (Ill. 257 B). The only exception that I could find was the capital at the east end of the south arcade, which has the same general proportions and arrangement as the other capitals, but its leaves are carved in a true Corinthian manner, quite plastic in effect, and one side bears a disc framed in beads, containing the dedicatory inscription which reads: *O Christ help Kyrios (the) architect! In fulfillment of a vow he built (the church); the same, having died, (his) tomb (is) in (the) apse.*⁸⁹

The exterior design of the church offers rather wide opportunity for adornment. The upper storey of the west façade was occupied by an open loggia consisting of a broad arch between two narrow ones, carried upon the colonnettes, the bases of which still remain. This feature was undoubtedly taken from the west façade of the "Cathedral" of Brâd. The windows have arcuated lintels and are without mouldings. The western portal may have been inserted after the completion of the church, a thing not unknown in the churches of Syria, for its mouldings and its doorcap, which is a heavy ovolo, are not like those of the side portals, but resemble portals of a later part of the century. The side doorways once more reproduce the now familiar

⁸⁹ A. III, insc. 76. P. II, B. III. 222-Y.

portals designed by this architect in other places and bearing his name. The profile is just the same (*Ill.* 52) except that the hood mould is set directly upon the frame mouldings and is of one piece of stone with the rest of the lintel.⁹⁰ Two new patterns of ornament are introduced still further to enrich the design, a twisted rope upon the convex part of the cyma, and crenellations upon the lower fascia.

Other Churches.

There is a smaller church at Deraʿmân⁹¹ which conforms to the type of the churches described above, in matters of plan, proportions and detail. It is almost completely ruined, but its plan shows a nave of six bays, an apse between side chambers, and a flat east wall. The capitals of its interior arcades are Corinthian in form, with uncut leaves. At Kōkanâyā,⁹² much

in the hills just south of the Roman road, is dated by an inscription of the year 431 carved upon the doorway of the little baptistery beside the church. The church certainly was completed before the baptistery was begun, and must therefore belong to the first quarter of the century, and indeed, some of the details suggest a date even earlier. The plan departs in no essential detail from those of the churches described above (*Ill.* 53). The opening to the prothesis is an arch. The impost of the half dome is marked by a moulding which is broken out and carried across the pier caps, and the mouldings of the archivolt are returned outward above this. The baptistery occupies the same position as in the East Church at Ksêdjbeh. Its east wall, with its protruding apse, is set a little forward of the east wall of the church. The ornament of the doorway of this diminutive structure is somewhat



Ill. 52. Church of Convent, lintel on side portal.

further south, there is a small church of five bays that preserves considerable portions of its east end, which is planned, like those of Fāfirtîn and Bābiskā, to show the exterior curve of the apse. There was a single arched window in this apse. The acanthus leaf caps of the apse piers and the uncut Corinthian capitals of the interior columns here indicate a date within the first quarter of the fifth century. At ʿAin Dilfeh,⁹³ beside the great Roman road, stands the apse of a church with the bases of a few columns in place before it. All the rest of the structure has disappeared; but these few details suggest a date early in the same century.

*Ḳaṣr Iblîsū. West Church.*⁹⁴ 431 A.D.

The westernmost of the two churches at Ḳaṣr Iblîsū,

crude but very interesting, especially as it presents the earliest example of cusping, as the outermost feature of a group of frame mouldings. The ornament above the frame mouldings is a simple torus carved with incised symbolical discs. This church is in a sadly ruined state. Its east end, and part of its north wall, are cut into the solid rock.

*Ḳalʿat Kalôtā. Temple-Church*⁹⁵.

It is difficult to determine the date of the conversion of the Pagan temples of Syria to the uses of Church, or the date of the demolition of the temples for the construction of Christian places of worship, which appears to have been the more common practice in Northern Syria. Soon after 430, it would seem, the emperor Theodosius II, issued a general decree aimed

⁹⁰ This "lintel at K" is marked on the plan, *Ill.* 96.

⁹³ *P.* II, B. p. 209.

⁹⁴ *P.* II, B. p. 206.

⁹¹ *P.* II, B. p. 240.

⁹⁵ *P.* II, B. p. 319, *Ill.* 358, Pl. XXVI.

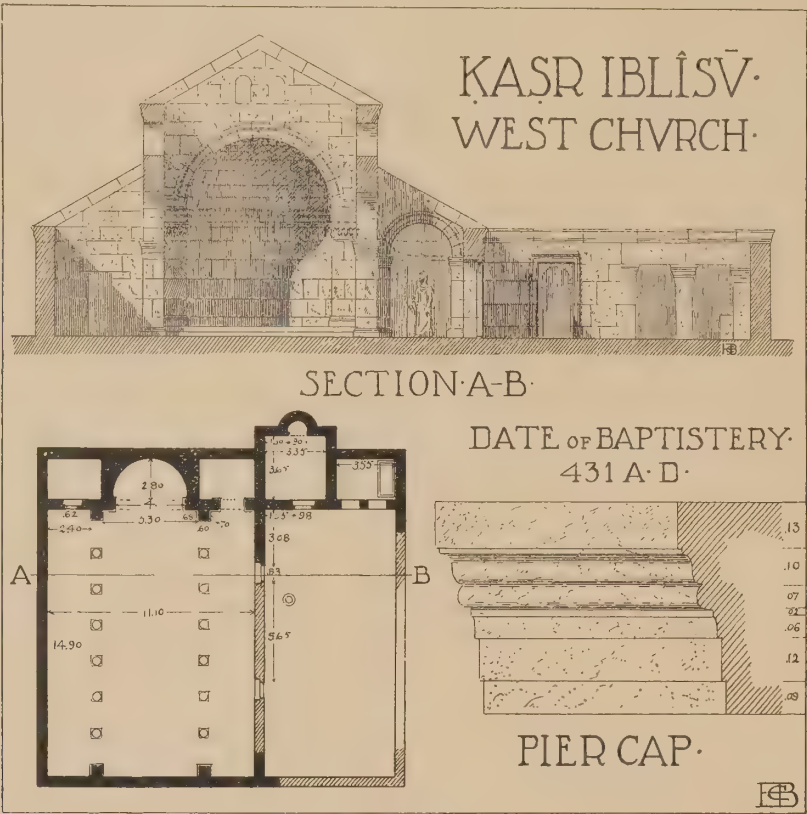
⁹² *A.* II, p. 146.

Early Churches in Syria

at the destruction of the ancient shrines of Paganism; but, as early as 401, we find Pagan fragments, probably from a temple, built into the East Church at Bābiskā. The temples of Northern Syria were for the most part small buildings, and some of these were probably converted into chapels before the middle of the fifth century. The larger structures, as we have seen at Kefr Nabō, were apparently demolished.

There is only one example in all Northern Syria, in which any considerable portions of a temple were permitted to survive in the erection of a church. A temple, or two temples, dedicated to the ancestral gods

with a beautifully wrought Corinthian capitals were utilized as responds beside the apse. Inverted architraves were used as base mouldings for the new walls of the east end and part of the north wall. The same detail appears as the cornice of other parts of the building, as well as for the caps of the apse piers. The western portal was taken bodily from a temple. But all the rest of the building is in the simplest style of the early Christian period. The new capitals are Corinthian in type only, having smooth arum leaves; one of the south portals is perfectly plain, the other has a frame of thin mouldings. The apse has two



III. 53.

of the region, stood upon the crest of a conspicuous conical hill in the Djebel Simʿān. The site is now called Qalʿat Kalōtā. Here there are whole sections of walls of two temples of the Roman period serving as parts of the walls of a large church, and architectural details of the older era used to embellish a Christian shrine. The plan presents the scheme and proportions that characterize the churches which we know belong to the early part of the fifth century. Half of the north wall at its eastern end is the actual wall of the older building. Four huge Corinthian columns were shortened and used to divide the first three bays at the east end. The remaining three were divided by new columns of ordinary scale. Ancient half columns

round-topped windows side by side, and these, if the church is as early as it appears to be, supply the earliest example of double windows in this position.

Shēkh Stēmān.⁹⁶ Church of Saint Mary.

There are no definitely dated churches of the middle of the fifth century in all this region; not one between 431 and 473 A.D. And, indeed, the several dated monuments of other kinds between these years are of little use in dating the churches. But the dated churches of the last quarter of the century show so great an advance in development, especially in their ornamental details, that we must endeavor to fill up the gap in dated buildings with a number of undated ones, as

⁹⁶ P. II, n. p. 338.



Ill. 54. Shêkh Slēmân. Church of St. Mary, interior looking East.

best we may. The Church of Saint Mary at Shêkh Slēmân is one of those which is most difficult to date, for, while the scheme and proportions of its ground plan would very definitely place it in the fourth century, it presents many details that are almost certainly of the fifth. This church is one of the most beautiful in Syria. (*Ills.* 54 and 55). Its east end is preserved almost in entirety, and, though the west façade is partly destroyed, the porch of columns, carrying an architrave and a richly carved parapet above it, is quite intact. The plan (*Ill.* 56) shows a narrow nave divided into six bays. The columns of the arcades, so far as they are visible, are Ionic, and of a type most characteristic of the plainest churches of the fourth century. This is the first church thus far encountered in which the construction and general arrangement of the east end are easily determined. In most of the churches of the fourth century, so far as can be discovered from their remains, the side aisle roofs were prolonged to cover the side chambers, and the apse was roofed by a lean-to of timbers above the half dome. Here, on the contrary, the aisle roofs are stopped against a high wall above the entrances to the side chambers, and the lean-to above the apse was continued on both sides to cover the side chambers which, of course, require another storey. The prothesis opens upon the

Early Churches in Syria.

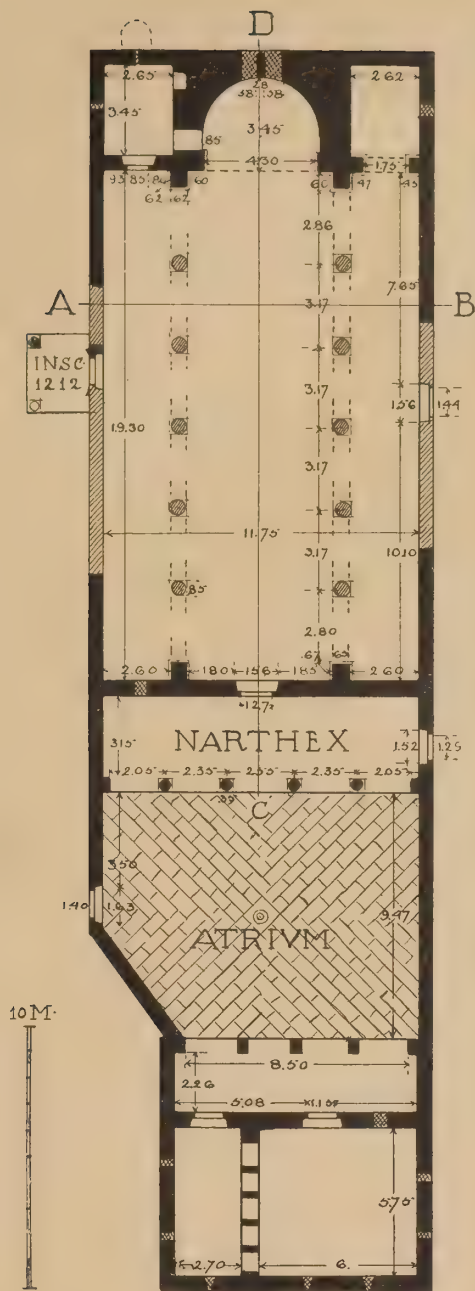
south aisle by means of a very high, undecorated arch which springs from a moulded pier cap on one side, but has no impost ornament on the other. The doorway of the diaconicon is framed in good mouldings. The coupled windows of the apse have flat tops. In spite of the fact that the columns of the nave are Ionic of a rather crude type, the ornament of the apse and its flanking piers or responds is rich and elaborate, and well handled withal. Yet there are no apparent evidences of a rebuilding of an older church. The caps of the pilaster piers, or responds, and those of the angle piers of the apse, which are set one course higher, are carved with acanthus foliage which, so far as treatment is concerned, should be placed midway between the truly plastic and quite Classical pier caps of the churches of the Djebel Rîhā, belonging almost certainly to the fourth century, and those more colouristic caps in churches dated at the end of the fifth. The mouldings at the springing of the half dome are plain, but those of the apse arch, which, by the way, are not returned outward at their springing, are almost hidden in fine pattern carving. Among these patterns are anthemions carved upon a cyma reversa, delicate interlaces upon bands, and reeds carved to represent small lentoid beads, placed between fascia, all of which suggest the fine pattern carving of the



Ill. 55. Shêkh Stēmân. Church of St. Mary, West façade.

doorways of the early part of the fifth century. A number of little colonnettes were found lying in the ruins, and these, following up a suggestion given by two brackets, one on either side of the apse arch, may be restored to place upon similar brackets above the arches of the nave and carried up to support the timbers of the roof — a feature not uncommon in the churches of the century following. All the windows in the church had arcuated lintels, but all were without mouldings. The charming narthex consists of a porch of four columns between returned end walls (*Ill. 200*). This porch occupies one side of a small atrium in front of the church. This is the first example we have encountered of a western atrium, and the only one we shall find in the study of the churches of Northern Syria, unless the unsymmetrical court preceding the East Church at Burdj Hêdar may be called an atrium. The columns on either side of the main axis are Corinthian in type, the other two are Ionic. Their capitals might belong to any period earlier than the end of the fifth century, for the Ionic type represented occurs in some of the oldest churches in Syria, and the uncut Corinthian type occurs at Midjeyyâ in the fourth century and in several churches dated from the opening years of the fifth. The architrave has two

narrow fascias below, a flat cyma recta in the middle, and a wide band at the top. These mouldings are returned downward along the faces of the piers at the ends of the porch. Here we have the only example that has been preserved in place of the many beautiful parapets of Northern Syria. Like the chancel rails, this high balustrade consists of alternating posts and solid slabs, the posts placed over the columns of the porch. The posts and the slabs are carved with sunken moulded panels, some rectangular, some round topped, and some representing arches supported upon columns. Within these panels of various shapes are incised discs wrought in intricate, symbolical, or purely decorative figures, all similar to discs upon dated lintels of the fifth century. The west portal presents a new design. The rather simple mouldings of the doorframe are broken in the middle of the lintel by a disc in relief, and the mouldings of the jambs are turned up in scrolls on either side of the threshold. Above the frame mouldings is a narrow flat space; above this is a heavy door-cap, slightly pulvinated and capped by a plain band. The pulvinated surface is enriched with flat surface carving in the middle where there is a large symbolical disc flanked on either side by two smaller discs, all bound together by scrolls of delicate grape-



Ill. 56. Shêkh Slemân. Church of St. Mary, plan.

vine foliage and fruit. In this work there is no suggestion of what is ordinarily recognized as colouristic technique; though flat, it is all modelled, and no deep incisions appear. At the ends of the lintel are remains of relief carving which has been broken away. Above the doorway, in place of the flat arch construction already seen in the "Cathedral" of Brâd, is a semi-circular relieving arch adorned with face mouldings which are returned outward on either side and carried

to the ends of the door-cap below. It may seem a little rash perhaps to assign so many new and strange motives of decoration to the middle of the fifth century, but, since we find them much more highly developed in definitely dated monuments from thirty to forty years later, and since they appear here in connexion with the other motives which are known to be older, and which entirely disappear in the later dated monuments, the assignment seems not unreasonable. The lintel of the north portal, the entrance toward the town, bears an inscription dedicated to Saint Mary.⁹⁷ This portal was provided with a distyle porch.

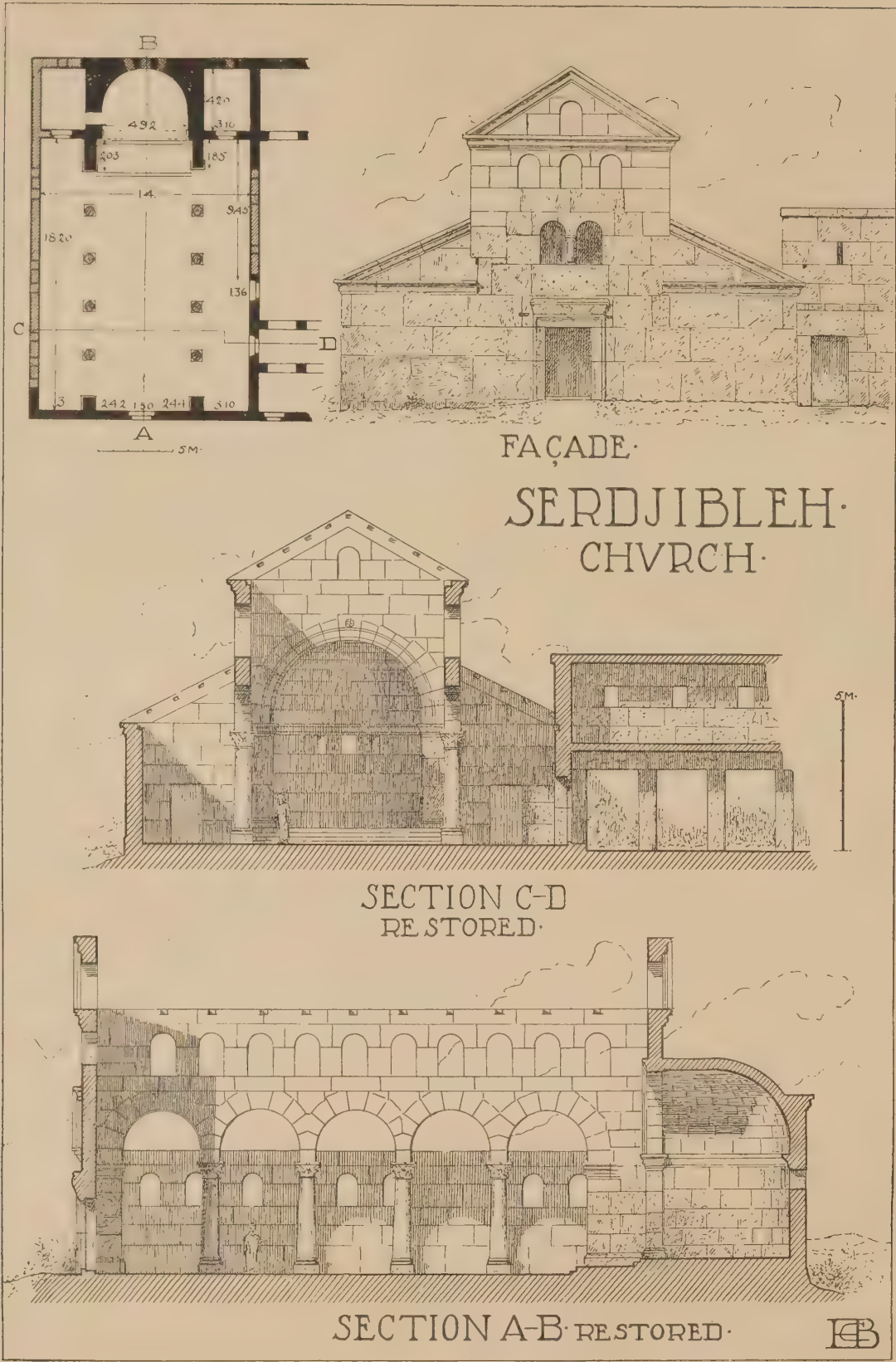
Serdjibleh. Church.⁹⁸

A far less ornate building is the church at Serdjibleh which is built of huge quadrated blocks of limestone, out of all scale and proportion to the size of the structure. The plan here (Ill. 57) consists of a nave of five bays, and a deeply set apse between side chambers. The apse has three rectangular windows radiating from the centre of the apse. The responds beside the apse are prolonged into walls between which the bema was placed, as we have seen in the very early church of Simkhâr. The ornament of the interior consists of the uncarved Corinthian capitals of the columns and the mouldings of the piers and responds. The impost moulding of the half dome has a simple right-lined profile like that of early fourth century mouldings, the others have a salient cyma recta above two narrow bands. The west façade is preserved almost to the top of its second storey. Here the cornice is carried across the ends of the aisles, the doorway is framed in simple mouldings, and is crowned by a splay-faced door-cap with flat surface carving. Above this portal is a pair of coupled round topped windows separated by a thin block on the outer face of which is carved an Ionic colonnette in low relief. The stones above this show the sills of three windows equally spaced upon the line of the clearstorey.

Burdj Hêdar. East Church.⁹⁹

A building of proportions quite similar to the above, and in a state about equally delapidated, is the East Church of Burdj Hêdar. The west end preserves only the lower part of its wall; but the east end still shows two arches standing although the half dome has fallen. The interesting features here are the apse, which is more than a semicircle in plan, and has an chancel

⁹⁷ There is some question whether or not this inscription (P. III. inscr. 1212) records a dedication. It reads, *Holy Mary, Mother of God help Sergios (the) builder! Amen*, and may be only a supplication for aid.
⁹⁸ A. II, p. 147. P. II, B. p. 227.
⁹⁹ P. II, B. p. 290, Ill. 314.





Ill. 58. Burdj Hêdar. East Church, interior looking East.

arch which is more than a semicircle (*Ill. 58*). The apse, moreover, is directly connected with both side chambers. The arch of the prothesis is stilted, but not of horseshoe form. The greater arch is plain but the smaller one is adorned with face mouldings adorned at the extrados by cuspings like those seen on the doorway of the baptistery of Ẓaṣr-Iblisū which is dated 431 A.D.

The horseshoe arch, that is the arch whose curve is continued beyond a semicircle, was not uncommon in Syria, nor was it of Christian origin. The well-preserved Classical pyramid tomb at Brād¹⁰⁰ has four of these arches supporting its stepped pyramidal canopy. In church architecture it usually appears in relieving arches over doorways, as we shall see later. It was occasionally employed in the arcades of naves, as we discover from the examination of the stilt blocks of fallen arches. There are no examples in situ. There were undoubtedly other examples of its use in apse arches; but the apse arch at Bātūtā and the one before us, are the only specimens in Northern Syria standing in place.¹⁰¹ The important feature to notice here, however, is that the inward curve below the semi-

circle was carried out in the half dome, as well as in the arch, giving the first suggestion of the dome of bulbous form that appears in much later Christian and Moslem architecture.

*Dêr Sim'ân. North Church.*¹⁰²

A church which combines many of the characteristics of the earlier dated structures with some of the features of the later is the independent church on the northern outskirts of Dêr Sim'ân (*Ill. 59*), that city of several churches all of which, with this one exception, were connected with large monasteries. This is a church of five bays, with an apse flanked on the south by a prothesis which gives upon the aisle by an arch and is carried up into a fine tower, and, on the north, by a diaconicon connected directly with the apse, and having a doorway upon the aisle, all in very logical fashion. The eastern terminations of the nave arcades take us back to an earlier period in having half columns instead of pilaster piers for responds. The apse was provided with a large arched window. The windows in the side walls are all rectangular and adorned with deeply incised mouldings upon their

¹⁰⁰ *P. II, B. Pl. XXV.*

¹⁰¹ Cf. Chapter VII, 2. Superstructures: *Apsæ*.

¹⁰² *P. II, B. p. 275, Ill. 294.*



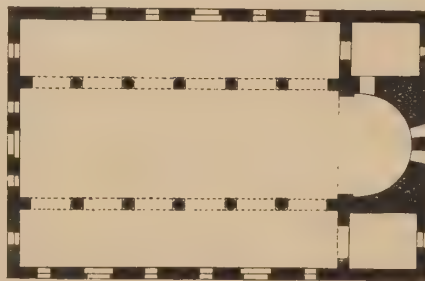
Ill. 59. Dêr Sim'ân. North Church, exterior from Southeast.

lintels only. The portals are framed in decorated and cusped mouldings which curl up in scrolls on either side of the threshold; they are topped with splay-faced door-caps carved with fine surface carving, and were protected by distyle porches with gable roofs of stone. The western doorway is surmounted by a stilted arch of discharge; above it were two storeys of windows, the lower round topped and widely spaced, the upper, rectangular and near together. The windows in the tower at the southeast angle of the church were also both rectangular and arcuated, but were irregularly placed. A heavy string moulding was carried directly across the east end, at the level of the window sills, and the large apse window, and the smaller window of the prothesis, were decorated with incised mouldings which, I believe, were executed at a period later than that of the building of the church.

for, although he never saw it, and never published it, he made brilliant use of some photographs supplied to him by a resident of Aleppo, at a time when out-of-door photography was a novelty, practiced under great difficulties and almost exclusively by professionals. The plan (*Ill. 60*) of the church will speak for itself, photographs and measured drawings of it have appeared in former publications. The interior presents pleasing proportions of breadth and height. The ornament is not profuse, but is well used; some of it is rather crude. The keystone of the apse bears a carved symbolical disc in relief. The mouldings of the apse arch are returned above the finely executed Corinthian caps of the apse piers, the impost moulding of the half dome terminates against these caps. The caps of the responds are a little less refined in treatment, but are fine examples of the carving of the period. The capitals

*Mshabbak. Church.*¹⁰³ *Circ. 460 A.D.*

The most perfectly preserved of all the basilical churches of North Syria, and one that seems typical of the ecclesiastical architecture of the third quarter of the fifth century in this province, is the church at Mshabbak. Only its gables are missing. Incidentally this church gave to M. de Vogüé the suggestion for his restorations of the basilical churches of North Syria,



Ill. 60. Mshabbak. Church, plan.

¹⁰³ *A. II, p. 143—146. P. II, n. p. 341, Ill. 391.*



Ill. 61. Mshabbak, Church, interior looking East.

of the nave arcade (*Ill. 61*) are mixed, showing an alternation of Corinthian and Ionic forms, the latter being supplied with a necking which makes their height equal to that of the others. And these types differ somewhat among themselves; there are several distinct types of the Corinthian form, one with angle volutes, and one without, one with plain leaves and another with acanthus foliage. In none of them is the colouristic manner evident. The clearstorey windows, nine in number, are placed without relation to the six arches below. In the course below the cornice course of the clearstorey wall appear the corbels, or brackets, for the support of roof timbers. These have the form of slightly truncated steep pyramids inverted and split in half vertically. They have a flat band at the top and the inner face of each is ornamented with a simple symbolical disc. One finds the exterior no less interesting than the interior. The roofs of the aisles were prolonged to cover the side chambers and there was no tower above the diaconicon as has been supposed. The half dome was protected by a flat half pyramid of wood carried on walls that rise a little above the side aisle roofs. The doorways are particularly interesting, though much of their ornament has been badly damaged. The west portal is provided with a plain relieving arch above

a tall splay-faced door-cap adorned with discs in high relief, which is set upon the frame mouldings of the opening. The two side portals in the south aisle and the single doorway on the north are framed in deep mouldings of elaborate profile, and were capped by heavy mouldings, of ovolo section, set about 15 cm. above the frame mouldings. These ovolo door-caps unfortunately have been much damaged, but the remnants show the first pure examples of truly colouristic carving, executed by deep triangular incisions upon a perfectly smooth surface, and having little or no surface modelling. All the doorways were originally protected by distyle porches carrying roofs of wood (*Ill. 184*). This church has many and large windows. These appear in the side aisle walls, at the west end of the aisles, on either side of west portal within the middle aisle, in the second storey of the façade, in the clearstorey sides and front, in both sides of the prothesis, and in the apse. All of these windows have arcuated lintels, excepting the three of the second storey of the west front, and all are perfectly plain, except those of the apse, which are provided with well-balanced mouldings in relief which are carried over both arches and half way down the jambs where they are returned outward a short distance and cut



Ill. 62.

off. So far as I can discover, these are the earliest church windows in Syria to bear relief mouldings, and are precisely similar to the coupled windows in the Bath at Serdjillā which is dated 473 A.D.¹⁰⁴ Incised mouldings may have been added at any time to windows which were originally plain; but there are no incised mouldings here.

*Khirbit il-Khaṭīb. Church.*¹⁰⁵ 473 A.D.

Though furnished with a dated inscription, this little church is of little significance (Ill. 62). It is an example of one of the smaller country churches with a minimum of decorative details. Its proportions are short, since it has only four bays. Its single claim to notice is the arrangement of the mouldings at the east end. Here, in addition to the string mouldings at the impost of the half dome, there appears a second string moulding at half the height of the apse, which is brought forward and returned against the pilaster piers. The caps of these piers were set far below the upper moulding and a little above the lower. This motive was not repeated in other churches.

Churches with square naves.

The description of the foregoing church makes a

suitable introduction to a class of churches, some of them unquestionably early, which have naves that are square, or approximately so, and most of which are divided longitudinally into four bays. These should not be confused with the undivided chapels which are sometimes almost square. Their relation to the later Pagan temples, like those of iṣ-Ṣanamên¹⁰⁶ and Slēm, is really significant.

*Dânā (North). Church.*¹⁰⁷ 483 A.D.

This little church has long since disappeared. It was published by Texier and Pullan, whose plans furnish the information herewith presented. The east end was that of the ordinary basilica of the fifth century in North Syria, except that, while both side chambers are connected with the apse, neither of them opens upon the nave (Ill. 191 H.) The plan shows the unusual feature of pilaster responds in the side aisle walls. The apse arch is of horseshoe form (Ill. 63), while the arches of the nave arcades are much stilted. The section published by Texier and Pullan shows the half dome of the apse as bulbous, a feature which connects it, like the horseshoe chancel arch, with the East Church at Burdj Hêdar. The capitals were of Corinthian type with garlanded angles.

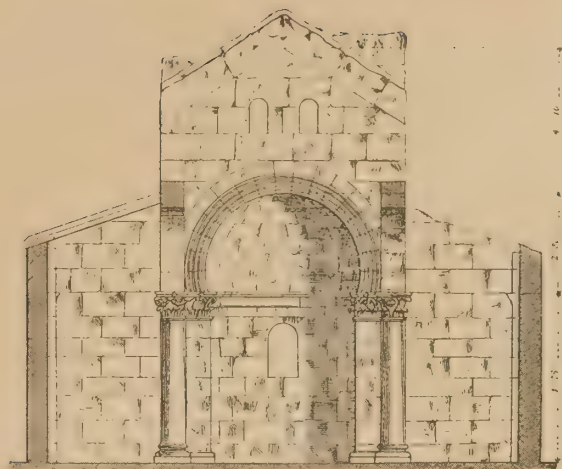
¹⁰⁴ P. II, B. pp. 118—122, Ill. 136.

¹⁰⁵ P. II, B. p. 202.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. p. 14.

¹⁰⁷ Texier & Pullan. *Architecture Byzantine*, Pl. LIX. A. II. p. 142, Fig. 53.

The church was entirely destroyed when the American Expedition visited Dānā. The inscription which Texier and Pullan published as belonging to the church, and translated with the date 540 A.D., was found on the entrance to a modern courtyard. Professor Prentice (A. III 90) read it differently and published its date as 483 A.D. The exceptional features of the plan, like the horseshoe apse, pilasters, and, especially the side chambers which do not open into the nave, connect this church with sixth century churches in Northeastern Syria, and, hence raise the question whether the inscription ever belonged to the church.



Ill. 63. *Dâna (North). Church, section.*

Other examples.

The site of ancient *Teleda* offers a good example of these square churches.¹⁰⁸ In this church, the arrangement of the east end is quite normal; both chambers opening into the aisles, and the south chamber being connected with the apse. The arch of the apse tends slightly toward horseshoe form; but the pilasters in the aisle walls of *Dâna* are not reproduced. A little church¹⁰⁹ of this plan was added, as a sort of chapel, or a baptistery, to the group of buildings on the south side of the old basilica at Khirbit Ḥass, in the fifth century, if one may judge by a comparison of the details of the larger and of the smaller building. Here, however, one wall of each side chamber is the curved wall of the apse. There was a porch of three columns between side walls in front of the church. Similar chapels were added to the "Cathedral" of Brâd (Ill. 33) and the church at il-Bârah.¹¹⁰

The Djebel Riḥā.

There is an important group of undated churches in the Djebel Riḥā which, by their ornamental details, seem to class themselves with the churches of the other Northern mountains already described in this chapter. Like most of the churches of this particular district, all of these buildings are in a sadly ruined condition, and are little short of heaps of fallen and broken building stones; yet their plans are readily made out, and sufficient architectural details are visible among the débris to warrant a comparative study.

*Btirsā.*¹¹¹

The smallest of the group attracts attention by two unusual, almost unique, features, viz. the use of architraves in the interior colonnades, and the employment

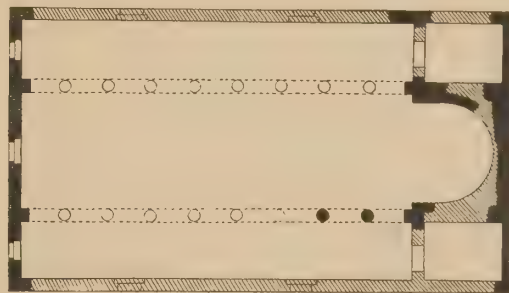


Ill. 64. *Btirsā. Church, plan.*

of capitals of novel form. The plan (Ill. 64) is quite normal, except in the number of eight bays into which the nave is divided, for a rather small church. The apse wall and the walls of the south side chamber are preserved in part. The former displays one window, fragments of the impost mouldings of the half dome — a tall, flat cyma recta — the pier cap, and a piece of the archivolt of the apse; the latter gives us a doorway with plain jambs and a simply moulded door-cap. The other chamber opened upon the north aisle through an arch. The cap of the apse pier is treated in rather flat Corinthian foliage, and the impost moulding of the apse is turned out over it. Upon this the moulding of the archivolt is returned outward. The columns of the nave are short, and the colonnades terminated in half columns. These columns have capitals of the bracketed Syrian order which appear in no other church, and which, in other kinds of buildings, may be dated in the second half of the fifth century. The columns carried an architrave of simple profile. In view of the short dimensions of these columns and the absence of arches, the question arises as to whether there was not an upper storey, a gallery, above the side aisles. The original existence of such a feature is quite possible when the height of the apse piers is taken into account.

*Dêr Sambil.*¹¹²

The church here (Ill. 65) is of the same general type as the churches of Khirbit Ḥass, Midjleyyā, and others described in the last chapter; but its details suggest a later date. Out of the mass of débris which



Ill. 65. *Dêr Sambil. Church, plan.*

¹⁰⁸ *P.* II, n. p. 242 Ill. 246.

¹¹¹ *A.* II, p. 154. *S. C.* text, p. 99.

Early Churches in Syria.

¹⁰⁹ *S. C.* Pl. 59.

¹¹² *A.* II, p. 94.

¹¹⁰ *A.* II, p. 97, Fig. 36.

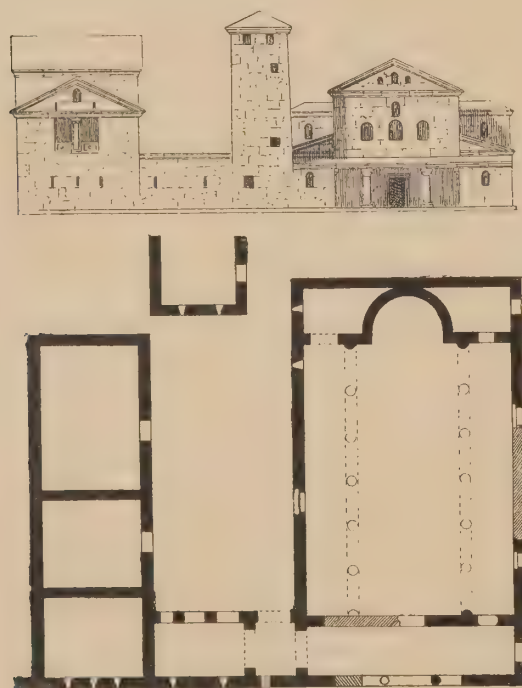


Ill. 66. Dêr Sambil. Church, fallen capitals in ruins.

marks the ruin rise the lower storey of the west front, two column shafts, and the two piers of the apse. Among the débris lie several capitals, two of which are quite intact, but are difficult to photograph (*Ill. 66*). Both are of the wind-blown variety carved with great skill and freedom of detail. The technique is purely plastic with no hint of colouristic feeling. The same free and beautiful style is to be seen in the carved ovolo door-cap above the middle west portal, which is a rich and graceful rinceau of acanthus leaves.

*Djerâdeh*¹¹³ and *Bênîn*.¹¹⁴

There are many well-preserved buildings in the deserted, ruined town of Djerâdeh; but the church is a complete wreck. The nave had six bays (*Ill. 67*),



Ill. 67. Djerâdeh. Church, plan and restoration.

and there are no straight walls between the side chambers and the apse, as one usually finds in churches of this plan. An arch with moulded archivolt separates the prothesis from the north aisle. The responds at the east end are half columns. There is a tower, two storeys high, above the prothesis, and a high tower, still well-preserved, adjoining the north end of the narthex.

The plan of the Bênin Church, which is about all that is left of it, is almost similar to the above, except that the south chamber protrudes beyond the aisle wall.

*il-Bârah. Church.*¹¹⁵

The great basilica of il-Bârah is one of the largest churches in the Djebel Riḥā, but it is hardly more now than a confused heap of ruins out of which rise the walls of a part of the façade, the piers of the apse and the walls which flank them. M. de Vogüé gives the nave seven bays; I could discover traces of only nine; but it would be impossible to restore the arcades with certainty without clearing the nave of the débris which fills it. The east end is quite regular according to the canons of the fifth century. The plan published by de Vogüé shows three windows breaking in parallel lines through the apse and the flat east wall. Both of the side chambers have doorways upon the ends of the aisles, and the responds at the east end were pilaster piers, the cap of one of which is still in place. The important question with regard to this church is one as to whether the side aisles had galleries above them or not. It seems probable that they had, both from the extraordinary amount of débris lying in the nave, and from the disposition of the members at the east end. The cap of the apse pier is raised to the extraordinary height of about two metres above the caps of the responds, and, if architraves were substituted for arches, as they

¹¹³ *A. II*, p. 152.

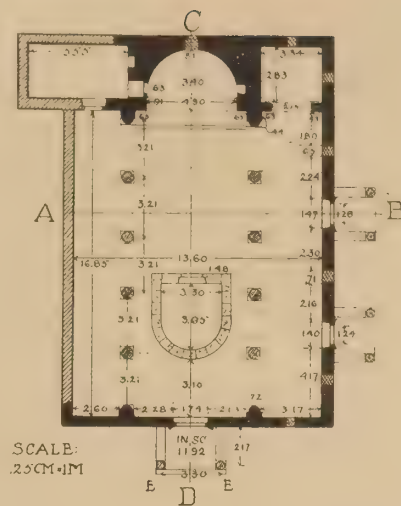
¹¹⁴ *A. II*, 154, *Fig. 61*.

¹¹⁵ *S. C. Pls. 60—62. A. II*, p. 97.

appear to have been, there would be somewhat over two metres, including the height of the pier caps, for the space to be occupied by the columns of an upper order which might have carried either architraves or arches and still have room for a clearstorey not too high above the apse. The caps of the piers and responds are beautiful examples of the best Corinthian type used in Syria, with tall, graceful acanthus leaves executed in a plastic manner. The door-cap of the central west portal displays flowing designs of vines and vases in low relief.¹¹⁶

*Kalôta. East Church.*¹¹⁷ 492 A.D.

The architect of the East Church at Kalôta, which is dated in the closing decade of the fifth century, employed certain old fashioned features that belong to the churches of the earlier parts of the century, and introduced new ones with all the ardour of a pioneer. He was a provincial, and fell back upon tradition for essentials, while he introduced new elements into his work in order to be in fashion. The west façade might perfectly well belong to the first quarter of the century, but the composition and ornament of the south wall, if their date was not fixed by an inscription, would almost certainly be assigned to the middle of the sixth century. There is nothing new or unusual about the plan (*Ill.* 68). The diaconicon was extended toward the north after the church was completed; the nave has six bays, and is rather wide in its proportions. The east end and the west façade are almost perfectly preserved. The interior columns with their arches and the clearstorey lie in the nave just as they fell. The half dome of the apse is an admirable piece of construction (*Ill.* 69); it has no impost moulding, but its archivolt is enriched with a fine set of mouldings which are returned at the impost level. Corinthian caps of beautiful proportions and excellent workmanship crown the piers of the apse. One course below them are the caps of the responds of the nave arcades. These responds return to the ancient forms of half columns; but unlike the half columns in the early churches of the fourth century, they are not monolithic shafts, being built up in courses and attached to flat pilaster piers. Their caps, therefore, are compounded of pier cap and half capital, and are ingeniously designed and charmingly executed. These caps and those of the apse piers, have Classical proportions and outlines, but the volutes of the Hellenistic capital are omitted, and the edges of the leaves are smooth, though the surfaces are modelled, and their tips curl over gracefully. The design of the west façade is exceedingly



Ill. 68. *Kalôta. East Church,*
plan. Date: 492 A.D.

simple. The single portal was framed in mouldings, and was protected by a distyle porch with a gabled roof of wood. Above this were three round topped windows on the clearstorey level. The pediment is pierced with two coupled, round arched windows surmounted by a small circular opening. The only feature in this façade which suggests its date is a window in the end of the south aisle, which is completely framed in a set of rich relief mouldings almost as deep as the window is wide. In the south wall there were four such heavily decorated windows and two portals under distyle porches. The portals themselves are framed in deep and richly carved mouldings and crowned with low intricately wrought bevelled door-caps (*Ill.* 70). The portal on the right, the men's entrance, is further enriched by cuspings. The mouldings of both doorways are terminated in scrolls. All this ornament is out of scale with the rest of the building.

*West Church.*¹¹⁸

The other church in this same ruined town appears to be a reconstruction upon an old ground plan. The narrow apse and middle aisle, and the great length of the nave suggest a fourth century foundation. The building is in almost complete ruins, but the south wall, which is preserved quite intact, appears to be the work of the architect of the East Church. It has no windows, but its two portals are replicas of the eastern doorway in the south wall of the other church.

*Bāṣufân. Church of Saint Phokas.*¹¹⁹ 492 A.D.

It is a pity that this church is so ruinous, for in it we have a summing up of the architecture of the fifth

¹¹⁶ S. C. Pl. 62.

¹¹⁸ P. II, B, p. 317, *Ill.* 354.

¹¹⁷ P. II, B, p. 315—317, *Ills.* 349—353.

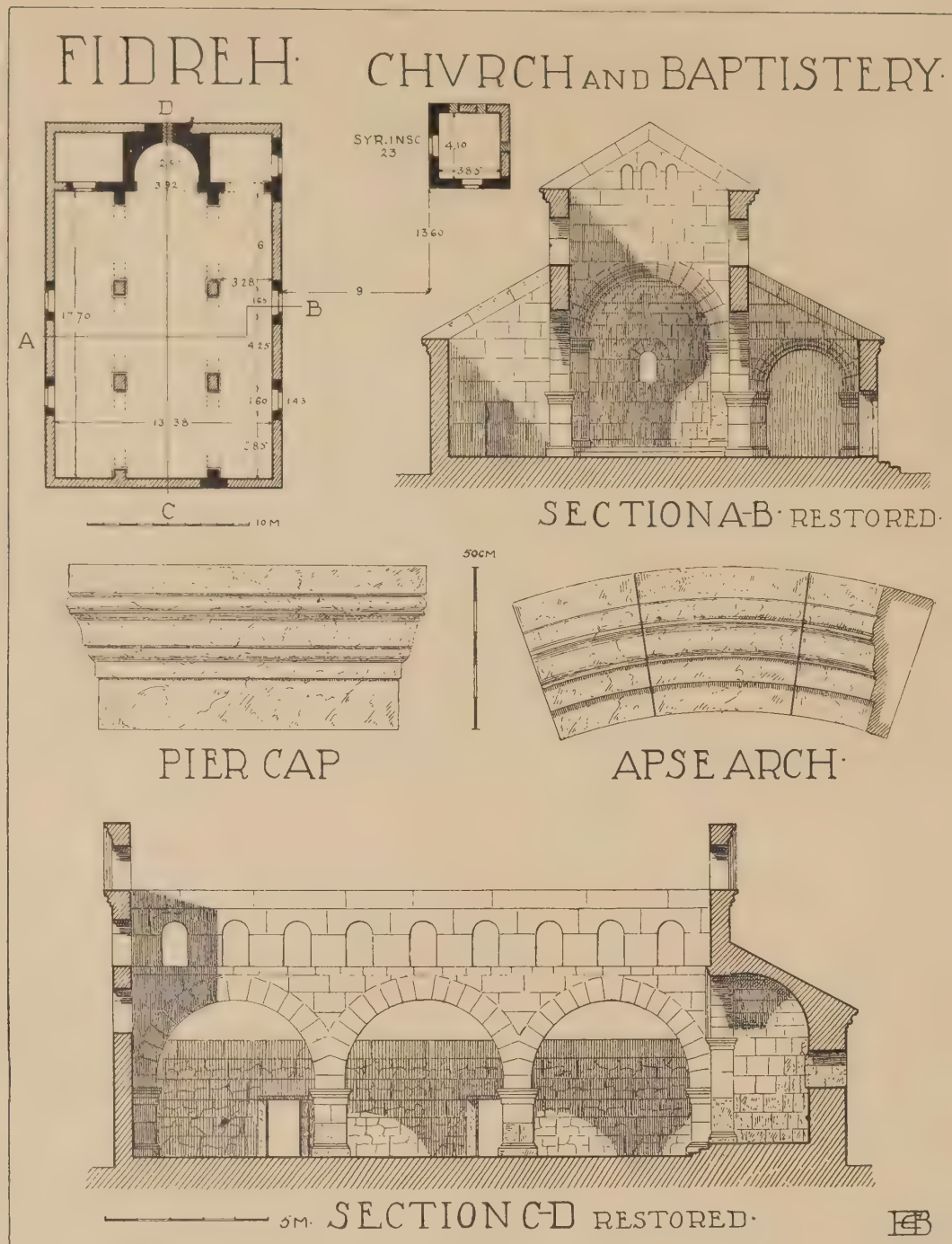
¹¹⁹ P. II, B, p. 285, *Ills.* 304—307.



Ill. 69. Kalôṭā. East Church, interior looking South east.



Ill. 70. Kalôṭā. East Church, exterior from the South.



Ill. 72.

from one window to the next, and then continued on to the portal where it runs up alongside of the mouldings of the doorway and over a flat relieving arch above it. The deep frame mouldings of the portal terminate in scrolls, and a heavy ovolo door-cap crowns the lintel. The ovolo door-cap is carved with a rich rinceau of acanthus, and finished at the top with a narrow band of conventionalized grapevine, all carried out in a rather colouristic technique. On the wall between the two windows is a dovetailed plate in relief, containing a Syriac inscription which names Saint Phokas as the

patron, and the year 491/2 as the date, of the church.

Type B

It will be remembered that the distinguishing mark of churches of this type is the substitution of a smaller number of piers, carrying broad arches for a larger number of columns, supporting narrow arches, in the longitudinal system of the naves. This new type of church appeared at least as early as the middle of the fifth century in Northern Syria. This peculiar arrangement of interior supports had probably been



Ill. 73. *Kalb Lauzeh. Church, interior looking South east.*

in use in the country to the east for a much longer time, and, in Southern Syria, it had been in vogue from a very early period. It is probable that the architects of Northern Syria borrowed the scheme from their nearer neighbours to the east.

*Fidreh.*¹²⁰

The earliest example of this type in Northern Syria departs in no essential element from the more ordinary type except in its one distinguishing feature (Ill. 72). The middle aisle is rather narrow, and the apse is small in proportion to the size of the side chambers. The side walls were rather poorly constructed of small irregularly shaped blocks. The jambs of the doorways are monolithic, and, with the lintels, are carved with a rich set of frame mouldings. The piers of the nave arcade are nearly square and carry moulded monolithic caps, the profiles of which suggest fourth century mouldings. Indeed, there is no reason why this church should not be assigned to the earlier century, and it would be very interesting if this could be proved, for then we should have both types of interior arrangement in the churches of Northern Syria from the very beginning.

*Kalb Lauzeh. Church*¹²¹ *Circ. 480 A.D.*

This is one of the most important of the churches published by M. de Vogüé, and one of the most important in all Syria. It is fully illustrated in the plates of *La Syrie Centrale*. The plan (Ill. 193 M) is a novel one in every respect. The entire semicircle of the apse protrudes beyond the east walls of the side chambers. The side chambers themselves are oblong in the direction of the main axis of the church. Between them is a space, equal to the width of the middle aisle, and walled on both sides. The upper half of this space is devoted to the bema and its five steps, and a doorway leads from it into the diaconicon, on the north. The lower half of the space is connected with the prothesis by another doorway. The nave is divided into aisles by two piers on either side, which carry three broad arches (Ill. 73). At the west end there are three divisions, an arched narthex between two chambers, wider than the side aisles, which were carried up into towers. Practically all of this structure is standing except the wall of the north aisle. The church is paved throughout with large slabs of limestone. From the point of view of construction this

¹²⁰ *P. II, B. p. 251.*

¹²¹ *S. C. Pls. 122—129. A. II, pp. 221—225.*

church is as unique in Northern Syria as in certain features of its plan. The walls of the side aisles are very high, and above the high main arches, on the side toward the aisles, is a corbel course. From this to the top of the aisle walls a roof of beautifully fitted stone slabs was laid, — the only example of its kind in Northern Syria. This roof is continued to cover the side chambers which were divided into two storeys by a floor also of stone. The upper chambers opened into the space above the bema by means of small doorways in front of which were shallow balconies. The western towers were three storeys high, but their intermediate floors were of wood. The windows throughout the buildings are rectangular, with the exception of three in the apse and one in the east wall of both side chambers which have arcuated lintels. The ornament of this church is new and extremely rich and profuse. The exterior wall of the apse is enriched by a two-storey order of applied columns (*Ill.* 74), the lower of which with its fine Corinthian capitals is in place. The upper order, which has disappeared, supported brackets under the cornice. The rectangular windows of the aisles, those of the lower storey of the towers, and those of the clearstorey, are decorated with mouldings which describe semicircles above the openings, and give them the appearance of being round topped. These mouldings are rather light and delicate. (*Ill.* 75) They are carried without break upon the sill level from one window to another in the same storey and, at the east end, are twisted up in small scrolls on either side of the openings. The doorways are uncommonly magnificent in their wealth of mouldings and carving. Cusping appears as the outer member of every set of frame mouldings, many of the mouldings themselves are carved with finely wrought patterns, each doorway has a carved frieze and a cornice, by way of a door-cap, and each side portal was provided with a moulded relieving arch and a distyle porch. The porch of the south doorway of the prothesis was originally a wide one, with a timber roof, embracing also the window to the east of the entrance, but this was later replaced by a small porch only over the doorway. The middle portal on this side had a huge hood of stone, of semicircular shape, carried by two columns, and the westernmost portal had a somewhat lower porch of gable form, also roofed in stone, carried by two columns. The window mouldings of the aisles were carried downward in a curve at their west end, and turned at the angle of the tower, to provide mouldings for the lower windows in the towers. The middle and the uppermost storeys of the towers were divided in

the design of the exterior by a prolongation of the cornice of the side aisle walls. In front, these two storeys were pierced by coupled rectangular openings framed in mouldings and separated by richly carved colonnettes in relief. The upper storeys were provided with similar windows on the sides also. Between the towers was a broad moulded arch which provided a narthex in front of the richly ornamented west portal. Above the narthex was an open gallery, with a balustrade, between the top storeys of the towers. The richness of the interior decoration will be best appreciated by examining the plates of *La Syrie Centrale*. It is sufficient here to call attention to the flowing foliate caps of the piers, the rich carving of the arches of the nave as well as of the apse arch, to the fluting of the piers of the apse, and to the order of colonnettes which rested upon brackets set above the moulded clearstorey string course and carried a set of double brackets beneath the ends of the timbers of the roof. After my initial visit to this place I was inclined to assign this wonderful monument to the sixth century. M. de Vogüé himself, I believe, considered it as a work of that century. But since I have seen many more examples of Syrian churches, especially those described below, I have come to the conclusion that the church is earlier. In the first place, the mouldings, those of the windows and those of the string courses, are lighter, and are used with greater restraint than in the churches which date from the closing years of the fifth century. The scroll that appears at the ends of the mouldings is also employed inconspicuously and with reserve. The capitals of the exterior order of columns are more like fourth century models. And last, but not least, the ornament of the doorways, especially the frieze and cornice features of the door-caps, are exactly similar to those of a lintel in Bābisā, which is dated in the year 480 A.D., and there are no other lintels that resemble these in all Northern Syria.

Ba'albek. Church.

At Ba'albek the German expedition uncovered the ruins of a large basilica church in front of the great temple of Jupiter Ba'al.¹²² Curiously enough this church, which was probably built as late as the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century, was oriented like the Pagan temple, with its apse at the west and its main entrance at the east. In plan it was a three-aisled church of the longitudinal type of the North, but with rectangular piers, like those at ʔalb Lauzeh, to carry the arches of the nave arcade. In

¹²² Theodore Wiegand, *Ba'albek*, II, pp. 130—143, Abbs. 188—190.



Ill. 74. Kalb Lauzeh. Church, exterior from East.



Ill. 75. Kalb Lauzeh. Church, exterior from the Southwest.

addition to its large eastern portal it had three smaller doors on each side. The sanctuary at the west end was the usual semicircular apse, covered by a half dome and with its floor raised one step above the level of the nave. Each side aisle terminated in a small apse which flanked the central apse and gave to the church the rare triple apse treatment that occurs at Ǧal'at Sim'ân and Reṣâfah.¹²³ Unlike the three apses of the church of Saint Simeon at Ǧal'at Sim'ân, these apses did not project on the exterior, but were inclosed within the solid, flat wall which formed the west end of the church. According to the restoration, three arches of wide span, in each arcade, carried the clearstorey wall which was penetrated by nine rectangular windows, each opening divided into two lights by a small colonnette. Above the windows, corbels carried the rafters of the wooden roof.

At a later time, but before the Arab occupation of Ba'albek, the church was remodelled, and re-oriented in the orthodox manner. To accomplish this change the eastern portal was widened to nearly the full width of the nave, a bema of three steps was built, and an apse constructed beyond the opening. This apse was horseshoe in plan on the interior and polygonal, with seven sides, on the exterior. No prothesis and diaconicon were built to flank this new apse. At the same time that the east end was transformed, a large doorway was broken through the central apse at the west end, and in back of each of the side apses, and opening off from them, were built narrow rectangular chambers. The southwestern chamber also opened directly upon the new west façade, and both chambers gave access to new chapels which were added at each side of the church. The small chapels, which were undivided on the interior and rectangular on the exterior, were built with their western ends flush with the west wall of the church, and terminated on the interior in an apse.

CLASS 3

Chapels

The number of these smaller ecclesiastical buildings in Northern Syria is very great, but only two or three of them are dated by inscriptions. In some cases they are found in, or near, large towns in which there are larger churches, and again they were the only religious buildings in small communities, while occasionally they are found standing quite alone in open country. They are of many types, some are unique in plan, few of them appear to be very early. There are several chapels so plain that they present a barnlike appearance. There are others, of the sixth century, which are among the

most richly decorated buildings in Northern Syria. It is necessary in grouping these buildings chronologically to fall back upon stylistic suggestions; but they may be classed according to types based upon their ground plans. Under type A we may group the simple rectangular buildings which had a sanctuary divided off at the east end, either by a pair of columns carrying an architrave from wall to wall, or by an arch. Type B may include chapels like the above but with an arch in the east wall opening into a rectangular chamber with a low lean-to roof. This chamber becomes the sanctuary, and may be of the same width as the main building, or narrower, or wider, extending out on one side or both, without having dividing walls. Type C is the simple rectangular building with an apse protruding from its east end; and D the same kind of structure, only having the apse enclosed in rectangular walls.

Type A

This simplest type, in its simplest form, may have originated from the small Pagan temples of the region, like the temple of Burdj Baḳirḥā,¹²⁴ which is an oblong structure unevenly divided in the interior by wall piers, and perhaps an arch, near the end opposite the entrance. The fine tetrastyle porch, or portico distyle-in-antis, that dignified the temples, was omitted, and the remainder of the building was a rectangle with high walls and a gabled roof. In the small detached chapels there is usually a western entrance, and almost invariably two side portals, which probably indicates that the custom of placing men in the eastern half of the church with the women below them was practiced in these little country chapels as well as in the larger churches. Two buildings of this type, one near Serdjibleh¹²⁵ and one at Bānaḳfūr,¹²⁶ were published by the American Expedition as „public buildings”; but after having seen a larger number of these small buildings, some with inscriptions upon them, I am convinced that they were houses of Christian worship, perhaps *εὐκτήρια*, places of prayer, or *μνημεῖα*, memorial chapels. The one near the ruined town of Serdjibleh (*Ill.* 76) is in a perfect state of preservation. Its high walls crowned with a cornice and its pediments, each pierced with a small window, were built of the finest dressed stonework. There is an absolutely plain doorway in every wall but the east end, five round topped windows high up in the side walls, and a pair of coupled windows with an Ionic colonnette in relief between them, on the same level, above the west entrance. There is no sign within of any dividing

¹²³ Cf. p. 189.

¹²⁴ *A.* II, pp. 66–69.

¹²⁵ *A.* II, p. 166.

¹²⁶ *A.* II, p. 167.



Ill. 76. Serjibleh. Chapel.

feature. The floor is of stone slabs, and forms the roof of a crypt excavated in the solid rock, which is held up by a row of monolithic piers carrying beams of stone. There is no evidence of sepulture here, yet I believe the crypt was intended for burial purposes. The west wall shows traces of a small distyle porch.

The chapel at Banakfûr presents the same general form. It has one western and two south portals, one of which is ornamented with a trapezoidal door-cap of rather elaborate design. On the south side, a long stone platform, and holes in the wall below the windows, suggest a continuous porch. Inside, we find another floor of stone slabs carried on piers in a deep, rock-hewn crypt, but the slabs at the east end are raised one course above the others to make a sort of bema a little over two metres deep. Part of this has fallen into the crypt where were found two small columns, pieces of moulded wall piers, sections of a moulded architrave, and two panels of a parapet; all of which may be restored as a sort of chancel rail and a structure like an iconastasis upon the platform (*Ill. 77*); but this would be the only iconastasis in Syria. Here again the crypt, which is not lined with cement as a cistern would have been, was, in all probability a memorial of some person or family.

On the western confines of Burdj Hêdar¹²⁷ is a somewhat similar structure, a little longer in proportions, and having a chancel arch two metres inside the east wall. The crypt of this chapel has two rows of longitudinal arches which support the slabs of the floor

above, and arcosolia are cut into the living rock on both sides. An inscription near by, which gives the date 487, probably belongs to this chapel, or to the little group of buildings on the north with which it was connected.

Beside the Roman highroad, in the middle of the pass between the Djebel Barîshâ and the Djebel Halaḳah, is a little wayside chapel which belongs to this class. It is called Ḳaṣr il-Mudakhkhin.¹²⁸ This chapel also has an arch at its east end.

The Dauwâr¹²⁹ chapel belongs to a small compact convent. There are two small rectangular windows in its east wall, with little caps above, and a small Ionic colonnette in relief between them. The windows in the side walls are rectangular also, but there are round topped, moulded windows in the east gable. There are no remains of any sort of interior division walls or arches; but the ruins on the south side are the remains of a continuous exterior colonnade. At Tell ʿAḳibrîn¹³⁰ there is one of these chapels in which the lower half of the entire south wall is excavated in the rock of the hillside. The only entrances are two in the north wall. An arch spans the building near its east end, and a doorway in the north side, within the arch, leads into a small chamber which was added beside the sanctuary. A panel of a chancel rail was found here with a Syriac inscription upon it.

Type B

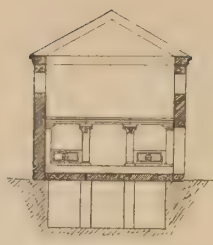
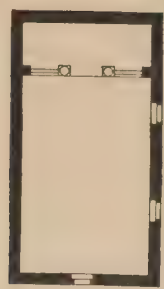
A slight modification of the former type is illustrated

¹²⁷ P. II, B. III. 318.

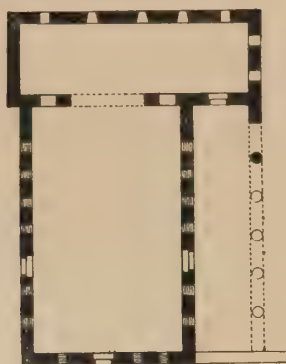
¹²⁸ P.-II. B. p. 209, III. 216.

¹²⁹ A. II, p. 232.

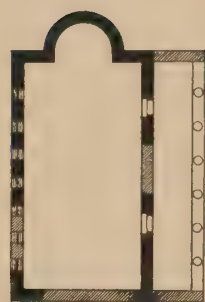
¹³⁰ P. II, B. p. 239, III. 240.



Ill. 77. *Bānaḳfūr. Chapel, plan and restored section.*



Ill. 78. *Srîr. Chapel, plan.*



Ill. 79. *Nūrîyeh. Chapel, plan.*

in the chapel called Srîr¹³¹ near Serdjibleh, which is in an excellent state of preservation (Ill. 78). Here, the main eastern gable is placed above the chancel arch, the arch itself is flanked by two narrow doorways, and the sanctuary, like an addition to the main structure, was roofed with a lean-to which rose from a low east wall to the crown of the arch. Here all is prepared for the introduction of side chambers; but there are no dividing walls, and it is probable that the divisions were effected either by hangings or by light wooden partitions which have disappeared. This eastern structure is extended to the south, the extension being divided from the sanctuary by an arch which has fallen. Upon the three walls and this arch an upper storey was carried up and covered by a double pitched roof at right angles to that of the main building. The extension has an opening toward the west, and from this to a projecting wall at the west end of the chapel extended a colonnade of five columns. The chapel was provided with two portals in the south wall, one to the west, and one to the north; it was well lighted by seven windows high up in each side wall, three on the same level in the west front, and three large windows and a large bull's eye in each gable. The exterior ornament was concentrated upon the west doorway in the south side, with its frame mouldings and finely carved door-cap, and upon the colonnade which was composed of Ionic columns of good fifth-century type carrying a moulded architrave. The decoration of the interior consists of the moulded piers of the arch, and its face mouldings, which are finished above in cusping, and which are returned and carried longitudinally to the side walls.

Near Brâd¹³² there is a small convent with a chapel quite similar to that at Srîr, but it is simpler in its decorations. In the extension of the sanctuary stands a large sarcophagus, which may indicate that this was a *μνημεῖον* for some personage of unusual importance

or sanctity, or even a *martyrion* where the relics of some minor martyr reposed.

Type C

The chapels of the third type are usually longer in proportion than the others; often their length is equal to two squares. The semicircular apsis protrudes from the west wall. The entrances are generally only the two in the south wall, and a portico was often carried along the south wall. The plan suggests a private double house with its partition wall and intermediate floor removed, its colonnades reduced to one storey, and an apse added to one end. Nūrîyeh¹³³ (Ill. 79) contains the ruins of such a chapel, in which one may observe three of a row of high windows with arcuated lintels and a very handsome doorway of fifth century design. At Ishruk,¹³⁴ the entire north wall with a row of six windows, the moulded apse arch, and the frames of its two south portals, are preserved. The portals with their good frame mouldings and denticulated door-caps, together with the rectangular windows, suggest an early date. A third example may be seen at Ma'ramâyâ¹³⁵ where again the high windows in the side walls are rectangular in form. The east portal in the south wall is framed in rather flat mouldings, and the door-cap is of bevelled, or splay-faced, profile, and is ornamented with delicate oriental patterns of interlaced discs above a row of very small dentils. At Kfêr,¹³⁶ in the Djebel il-A'la, there is one of these chapels, almost perfectly preserved (Ill. 80), which breaks the monotony of plan by having an arch in the south wall, just forward of the apse, opening into a square chamber, and a doorway opposite which led into a smaller chamber now destroyed. Here we have the prothesis and diaconicon as projections, like little transepts. A colonnade extended along the south wall from the prothesis chamber to an extension of the west wall of the chapel. The only entrances were two

¹³¹ A. II, p. 150. P. II, B. p. 229.

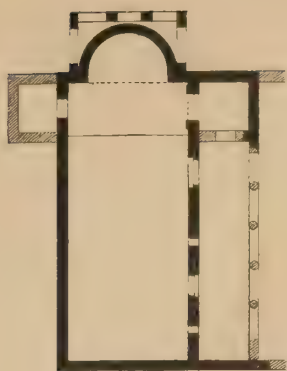
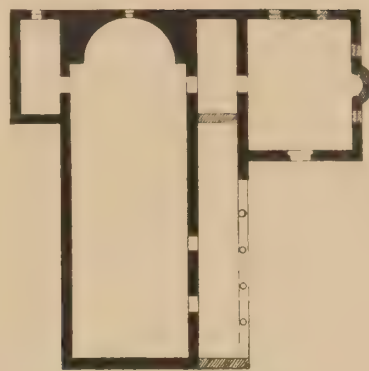
¹³⁴ A. II, p. 89.

¹³² P. II, B. III. 347.

¹³⁵ A. II, p. 91.

¹³³ A. II, p. 91.

¹³⁶ A. II, p. 149.

Ill. 80. *Kfêr. Chapel, plan.*Ill. 81. *Rbê'ah. Chapel, plan.*

on the south. All the windows were rectangular with the exception of one in each pediment which is round topped and stands between two rectangles. The half dome is a beautiful example of stone cutting, but the construction of piers and architraves about it appears to have been an addition for the support of a projecting roof of wood. The face of the apse arch bears a set of flat mouldings which spring directly from good Corinthian pier caps; but the chief ornamental feature of the church is the arch of the prothesis, which has not only pier caps of excellent late Corinthian design, but face mouldings of elaborate profile, carved with bay leaves, the bead-and-reel, and anthemions, and framed outside with cusping.

Type D

The Djebel Riḥā furnishes the examples of the fourth type. At B^cūdā¹³⁷ there is a chapel which exists today

only in ground plan. It was almost three squares long, and terminated toward the east in a semicircular apse hidden on the exterior by rectangular walls. There were two doorways in the south wall, and one at the west, where there was also a nearly square narthex with openings in all sides. A more elaborate chapel of the same general type is that at Rbê'ah,¹³⁸ in which we find a building a little larger than the foregoing, and very much better preserved, but omitting the narthex. As we have seen in the chapel at Kêfr, there are openings in the side walls just in front of the apse, leading into side chambers (Ill. 81). Both of these openings are doorways. The chambers are oblong in the direction of the main axis of the chapel. A colonnade completed the plan on the south side, and south of the south chamber was a large rectangular room which was perhaps a baptistery. In the later Middle Ages a miḥrab was inserted in the south wall of this apartment, and it was converted into a mosque.

4. CHURCHES OF NORTHEASTERN SYRIA

THE plans of the churches of Northeastern Syria, though conforming to a single general type, present variations in minor features which exclude monotony. In the buildings which may be assigned to the fifth century the supports of the arcades of the nave are uniformly piers built up of small, but well-dressed, blocks of stone, crowned with large moulded caps in one or two pieces. The number of arches varies from six to two on a side. In certain churches an extra arch, narrower than the others, is added at the west end on either side, to form a sort of interior narthex by means of a high transverse arch thrown across the middle aisle between the westernmost piers, and narrower arches over the side aisles at the same point. This arrangement is peculiar to the region, and appears in the fourth century church at I'djâz. In one

church we find a triple arched narthex between square towers, in another an interior narthex as described above, combined with an inclosed exo-narthex. All of these churches have an apse and side chambers. Only one of them has its apse set out from the east wall, creating a deep bema at the end of the middle aisle and between the chambers, as we have already seen at Ḳalb Lauzeh. In the matter of construction, we shall find that these churches differ widely among themselves. Some of them were built entirely of basalt. In others, on the western edge of the district, basalt and limestone were mixed in the structure. In a third group, only the foundation courses, the piers and arches and the door frames were built of stone; all the upper parts of the walls being made of sun-baked bricks. All these buildings were roofed with wood. We shall

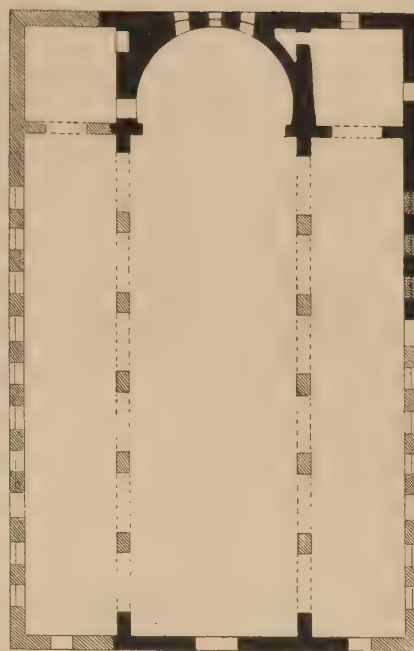
¹³⁷ A. II, p. 103.

¹³⁸ A. II, p. 102.

find the ornament sparse and uninteresting, not so good, indeed, as the ornament of the domestic architecture of the region. Wherever limestone appears, good mouldings were used; but, where basalt is the only available material, the ornament becomes flat and lifeless. Most of the caps of piers of all sorts have simple, right-lined profiles, like those in the Christian architecture of Southern Syria, where the material was identical. In a few examples we shall encounter piers with moulded caps, and, upon the lintels and jambs of the portals, often a kind of flat pattern-carving which, however plain it may seem beside the ornament of the portals of Northern Syria, far surpasses any ornament ever attempted in the basalt region of the South.

*Zebed, East Church.*¹³⁹

The only building that rises well above the ground in all the flat waste which marks the site of Zebed, is a church, which appears to have been the only building in the entire city that was built of stone throughout. This is the East Church, which, in deference to a representation of the Madonna and Child carved in low relief upon its principal portal, we may call the "Church of the Virgin", or of the Theotokos. Only parts of the south and west wall, and fragments of the east end, are standing (*Ills.* 82 and 83); but these are sufficient to give us all the necessary information with regard to the structure, and the entire plan is readily traced in the fallen remains. This presents a nave of six bays and broad apse of slightly horseshoe form, between large, square, side chambers which open upon the aisles by means of arches (*Ill.* 84). The structure of the church is interesting, being peculiar to the stone buildings of the region. The lower courses of the walls are of well squared and finished blocks of basalt; the frames of the doorways, and the arches and reveals of the windows are also of finished stonework. All the body of the walls is double-faced, and is made up of small blocks presenting rectangular faces of rougher surface finish than the others, and these are bonded at regular intervals with long stones, squared at the ends, which run through the wall, and appear in rough projections in the outer surface of the walls. In the interior, all the stonework appears to have been smoothly finished, and all the piers and the main arches, were composed of much larger stones finished even more carefully. It is plain that the interior surfaces were covered with plaster. The smaller arches, i. e. those of the side chambers and of the windows, were composed of small voussoirs with highly finished sur-



Ill. 84. *Zebed. East Church, plan.*

faces. There is practically no carved ornament. The cap mouldings are all bevels beneath flat bands, and the lintels of the doorways, with the exception of the west portal, have only simple crosses upon a sunken circular background. The western portals is enriched with very low relief carving. In the middle of the lintel is a flat relief representing the Virgin and Child enthroned within a circular ring of beads (*Ill.* 284) and flanked by adoring angels. From the lower quarter of the circle, on either side, extends a band of highly conventionalized grapevine which was returned downward along the jambs of the portal. This sculpture, an example almost unique in Syria, is more fully described in a later chapter of this book.

*Ma'râtā, Church.*¹⁴⁰

A good example of a building in which limestone and basalt were combined is the church of Ma'râtā in the western confines of the region. The plan (*Ill.* 85) shows six bays, an apse between side chambers in an east end which is now completely ruined, and a triple-arched narthex between square towers at the ends of the aisles. The outer walls were all of limestone, the interior piers and niches were of basalt. The use of limestone encouraged the use of exterior mouldings; even the windows had continuous frame mouldings like those of the Northern churches, and the example set in the softer stone stimulated the stone cutters to execute mouldings in the basalt, for the caps of the piers of the nave, all of which are complete, show

¹³⁹ *A.* II, p. 303.

¹⁴⁰ *P.* II, B. p. 88.

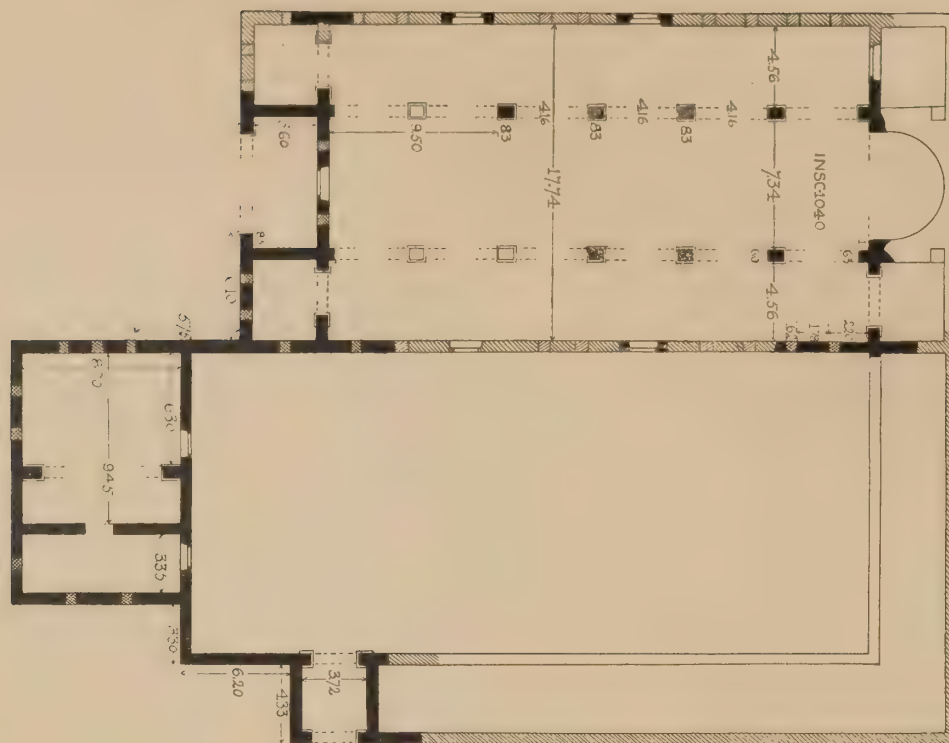


Ill. 82. Zebed. East Church, interior looking East.



Ill. 83. Zebed. East Church, exterior from the South.

Early Churches in Syria



Ill. 85. *Ma'râtā. Church, plan.*

simple, narrow mouldings, and even the arches were provided with moulded archivolts.

*il-Anderîn, South Church.*¹⁴¹

The more common type of fifth century church in this region is well represented by the South Church of the great mud-brick city of *Androna*, which boasted of ten churches all told. Of all these, only two, of which this was one, were built of stone. The church is particularly interesting as being surrounded with a rectangular peribolos wall, in which arcosolia were placed, a feature described in a later chapter of this book (Ill. 209). The nave was divided into aisles by three piers, and three, broad, high arches, with a lower, narrow arch at the west end, on both sides. The western piers were T form in plan, and a broad transverse arch over the main aisle connected them (Ill. 205). The broad apse, lighted by three windows, was flanked by chambers; that on the south giving upon the aisle by an arch. Adjoining the north side of the church, at its east end, was a rectangular building with three arcosolia and a recess inside the entrance, which gave it a cruciform plan within. The church building is a mass of ruins; yet there are several sections of wall which preserve doorways and windows (Ill. 86); the

east end is preserved up to the level of the half dome, and the two T form piers are completely preserved. The construction of the building is quite similar to that of the East Church at Zebed described above; but there is much more ornament. The portals are framed in bands of flat relief ornament in which interlaces and conventional grapevine occur, and, in the middle of each lintel, there is a circular disc inscribed about the cross, with α and ω and other symbols in the quadrants. The caps of the interior piers and responds are moulded in simple, free profiles.

*il-Anderîn, "Church of the Holy Trinity."*¹⁴²

The nave of church No. 8 at *il-Anderîn* is almost square; but it was divided into aisles by two piers and three broad arches on either side (Ill. 87). The east end is perfectly regular, but both side chambers are connected with the apse. This church was constructed, in large part, of sun-dried brick, and none of it is standing above the mounds of earth which mark the ruins of its walls. Its piers and arches and doorways, which were all of stone, lie about on all sides. One of the lintels lying near bears an inscription in relief letters which indicates that the church was perhaps dedicated to the Holy Trinity.

¹⁴¹ P. II, B. 58. An inscribed lintel from the ruins of the northeast tower of the peribolos gives the date 528 A.D. When he first published the church, Professor Butler considered this lintel "as coeval with the building of the church". Later, however, he came to feel that the church must have been earlier.

¹⁴² P. II, B. p. 61.



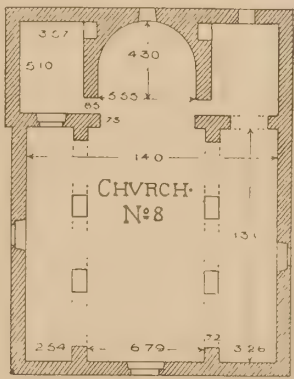
Ill. 86. *il-Anderin. South Church, exterior from the South.*

*il-Anderin, Double Church,*¹⁴³ “*Saint Michael & Saint Gabriel.*”

Churches Nos. 4 and 5, in this same city of *Androna*, may be treated as a double church, since they are separated by a passage less than six metres wide. According to two inscriptions, both churches were the pious offering of a citizen named Dometios, son of Mareas, and the south church is called the *seat of the Archangel*, which unquestionably refers to Saint Michael.¹⁴⁴ The north church was probably erected soon after the other, and would thus be the church of Saint Gabriel. In this second offering, Dometios was joined by his wife Synklētikē and their children. Saint Gabriel’s then, or the northern church, was of the simple plan of the churches of the period (Ill, 193-N). An arcade, carried upon piers, extended across the west front and along the north side.

Saint Gabriel’s church was much more elaborate in plan.¹⁴⁵ Its nave of three broad bays had a pair of cruciform piers at the west end, which carried narrow

longitudinal arches between them and the west wall, and transverse arches over the middle aisle and side aisles also, creating a sort of interior narthex with square compartments at both ends. Adjoining the north end of this narthex, was a square chamber with a stair in it winding about a circular newel. The west



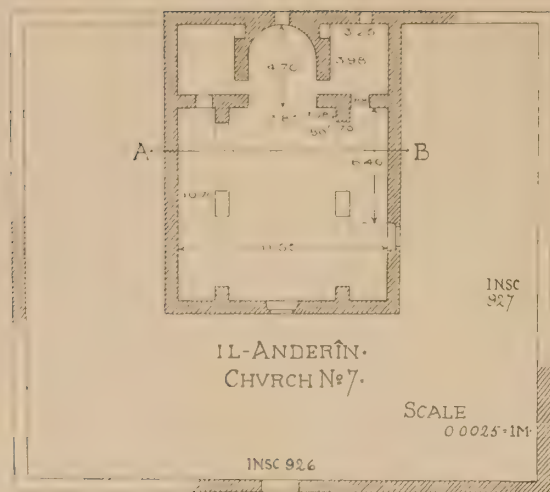
Ill. 87. *il-Anderin. “Church of the Holy Trinity”, plan.*

¹⁴³ P. II, B. p. 57.

¹⁴⁴ P. III, B. insc. 920, 921.

¹⁴⁵ The polygonal treatment of the exterior of the apse and the lateral openings from the side chambers into the space in front of the apse make it seem likely that this church, and all the others at *il-Anderin* with this arrangement of the side chambers, should be dated in the sixth century.

Early Churches in Syria.



III. 88.

wall was set on a line with the west wall of the other church, but, in place of an open arcade, we find a closed narthex spanned by two arches and entered by doorways in front and at the ends. To the south of the church was an enclosed atrium. The arrangement of the east end is not unlike that of the church of ẖalb-Lauzeh,¹⁴⁶ except that the protruding apse is enclosed by three sides of a polygon. The square side chambers open upon the bema and the aisles. It is probable that the bema space, in front of the apse, was covered by a tunnel vault. The lintels of two doorways are ornamented with inscriptions in relief and with flat bands of grapevine ornament.

*il-Anderîn, Church of Saint Theodoros.*¹⁴⁷

This is a somewhat smaller church. Its nave is nearly square, and there were but two arches on either side. Both side chambers are connected with the apse, as well as with the aisles (III. 88). The church stands at the east end of a small, square enclosure with portals in three of its walls. One of the fallen lintels is adorned with two lines of large letters in relief, a row of decorated beads, and a broad band of grapevine ornament. A cross in relief occupies the centre of the lintel which is framed in a plain raised band.

*Umm it-Tuwêneh. Church of Saint Stephen.*¹⁴⁸

There is only one other church in this region, which by analogy may be classed with the foregoing. At Umm it-Tuwêneh there is a church which was probably dedicated to Saint Stephen. Only part of the east end is preserved, the rest of the structure being a confused heap of ruins. This building appears to have been built of stone throughout. Its apse was connected on both sides with square side chambers which apparently had no direct access to the aisles. The piers beside the apse projected more than twice as far into the nave as was usual. The interior arrangement could not be made out, but it is probable that there were either three or four arches carried by piers on either side of the nave. Upon a large stone in the apse is an interesting monogram which spells ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥ "of Stephen."

¹⁴⁶ Cf. p. 71.

¹⁴⁷ P. II, B. p. 61, *Ills.* 57, 58. P. III, B. *insc.* 926.

¹⁴⁸ P. II, B. p. 10, *Ill.* 6. Professor Butlér, when he first published this church, dated it 539/40 A.D. from a monogram found upon a slab of basalt lying loose in the apse. Because of its similarity to the churches of il-Anderîn, he has moved the church back to the fifth century. It now seems probable that all these churches with lateral doors from the side chambers belong to the sixth century.

CHAPTER IV

THE MONASTERIES: 1. INTRODUCTION: 2. SOUTHERN SYRIA: 3. NORTHERN SYRIA:
4. NORTHEASTERN SYRIA:

1. INTRODUCTION

THE edict of Milan scarcely had been promulgated before monasteries appeared in Syria. There seems to be an impression among writers that monasticism came into Syria from Egypt; but there are very early inscriptions, as well as several early buildings, which suggest the presence of monastic institutions in Syria at least as early as the middle of the fourth century. Christian hermits, *anchores* as they were called, were wont to live solitary lives of religious meditation in desert places about Antioch, as well as in Egypt, long before the Peace of the Church; but it is improbable that cenobitic, religious communities, as an organized form of devotion, holding property and building houses and churches, could have come into being before the official recognition of Christianity. There was ample Pagan precedent for the establishment of Christian religious communities in the resident priesthoods of various temples to heathen gods, many of which lived in cells about the shrine, and some of which are believed to have been sworn to celibacy. There were even mendicant priests of the Syrian Goddess before there were mendicant friars. Saint Jerome, in his biography of Saint Hilarion of Gaza, seems to regard this monk, who flourished about the time of Constantine, as the originator of the monastic life in the Syrian Church. There is an inscription¹⁴⁹ of the year 354, A.D. found at il-Hît in the Djebel Ḥaurân, which gives the whole organization of a religious community, naming Eulogios priest and *archimandrite*, another priest Doeros, a deacon Elias, and one Sabini-anos deacon and *econome* of the community. The word *archimandrite* was derived from *μάνδρα*, *mandra*, the fold, and the functions of the office were the same as those of an abbot. This monastery was dedicated, like many others, to Saint Sergios; but unfortunately there is nothing left of it.

Judging by the inscriptions, and by the buildings, — for the available literature on the subject is very scant and unsatisfactory —, monasticism in the early days was more prevalent in Southern Syria than in the North. This seems to lend support to the theory

of its Egyptian origin, if propinquity is to be taken into account. We know, however, that the monastic life was in vogue in Northern Syria before the end of the fourth century, for about the year 385, Rabulā, later the renowned bishop of Edessa, retired to a monastery to the east of Ḳinnisrîn;¹⁵⁰ and, at least very early in the fifth century, there was a monastery at *Telneshē*, for to this retreat, about 412, came one Simeon, who was presently to become the central figure in the ascetic life of the Eastern Church and, as Saint Simeon Stylites, to give great impetus to monasticism in the North. In fact, from the evidence given by the monastic buildings of Northern Syria, we should be forced to believe that all the more important monasteries, during the latter part of the fifth century and all of the sixth, existed in connection with the pilgrimages to the shrine of this famous Syrian pillar-saint; for, with few exceptions, they are situated upon the roads that lead toward Ḳal'at Sim'ân, and are made up, in large part, of hospices for the pilgrims to that shrine. Ordinarily the monasteries of Syria were small institutions having a chapel with residential buildings grouped about it. There was only one great monastery in the South, that at id-Dêr, south of Boṣrā. The others were comparatively unimportant architecturally, some of them situated in large towns, others in remote and lonely places. In the North, the great monastic centre was at Ḳal'at Sim'ân, as I have said, and in the town of Dêr Sim'ân, below the great shrine, there were no less than three large conventual institutions with large churches and extensive inns for pilgrims. On the road from Antioch to Ḳal'at Sim'ân were Ḳaṣr il-Benât, Dêr Termânîn, and Dêr Tell-^cAdeh, the old Aramaic, as well as the modern Arabic word *dêr* signifying a convent or monastery; and there were other religious establishments of minor importance scattered here and there among the hills, or in the larger towns. In dealing with this question it is often difficult to distinguish a small monastery in one of the towns from an ordinary church with residences for the regular clergy, for, although many of the churches

¹⁴⁹ W. H. Waddington, *Inscriptions Grecques et Latines*, 2124.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. p. 39.

stand by themselves, there are others with residences attached to one side of the atrium which were undoubtedly only houses for the resident priest or priests. Where these residential buildings are more extensive, it is almost impossible to determine whether they were monastic buildings or not. There are churches in the larger and more compactly built cities, like Umm idj-Djimâl, that are completely surrounded by residences, irregularly placed and conforming to no definite plan of arrangement. Such of these buildings as communicate directly with the atrium of the church may be taken to belong to the religious group. Those which are adjacent to the church or its atrium, but have only indirect communication with either, may be taken as private residences, built on land belonging to the church or not, according to the system of land tenures about which we know little or nothing. Therefore the identification of one of these groups as a monastery would depend upon the extent of the residential

buildings in direct communication with the religious building, and one can not be expected to judge unerringly between ordinary churches, that have a larger group of residential buildings, and monasteries with a smaller group. There are, however, a number of establishments so planned that there can be little or no doubt of their monastic origin.

A majority of the monasteries of Syria were founded in the fourth and fifth centuries, though some of the churches which belong to them were not erected until the sixth, perhaps replacing older and smaller chapels. The monasteries of Northern Syria, particularly the church connected with the great convent at Ǧalat Simʿân, had such a profound influence upon the architecture of the sixth century that it seems logical to introduce the following chapter upon monasteries, between the chapter on the churches of the fifth century and that on the churches of the sixth.

2. MONASTERIES OF SOUTHERN SYRIA

*Umm idj-Djimâl. Monastery of the East Church*¹⁵¹
circ. 350 A.D.

THE chapel of this monastic group has been already described on page 21 where it appears among the earliest type of hall churches. The east end of the church abuts upon the city wall, in fact is a part of it. South of church and its colonnaded porch lies an enclosed rectangle, two sides of which are occupied by residential buildings (*Ill.* 16). The east wall of the close is the city wall, its south side is bounded by a high single wall. On the north, adjoining the church along its entire length, is a row of large residential structures, and on the west a row of smaller buildings. In the southwest angle of the close, within the outer wall, is a small square vestibule giving upon the street or narrow lane, by an open arch, and opening into the close by a doorway that was closed by a door. Just within this vestibule and occupying the southwest angle of the group, is a room with a high transverse arch which corresponds perhaps to the abbot's parlour in the Mediaeval monasteries of Europe. Next to this are two small, square rooms two storeys high, and, beyond these, two smaller square chambers, also in two storeys, which complete this side of the quadrangle of buildings. East of these, and adjoining the church, is a large, square structure divided trans-

versely by a wall into two oblong rooms, both two storeys high. The remainder of the east side of the cloister is taken up by a larger and a smaller apartment, both approximately square, and both spanned by high transverse arches which brought their roofs to the general level of the two storey buildings adjoining them on the west. The larger of these two rooms is provided with a doorway opening into the nave of the church, and one opening into the square room on the east. This larger room may have served as a sort of chapter house, or some other kind of general gathering place for the religious community. The remaining apartment to the east was perhaps the refectory. The group thus provides three large apartments and six smaller ones in two storeys, or twelve rooms, for the accommodation of the brotherhood. There were only two entrances into the group, one from the church, the other from the narrow street by way of the vestibule. The establishment forms a compact unit, the component parts of which are interdependent. On purely structural grounds the monastery would be dated about the middle of the fourth century.

id-Dêr. Shaḳḳā.

"A late Christian monastery exists in the ruins on the outskirts of the town" (Shaḳḳā)¹⁵². This monastery

¹⁵¹ *P.* II, *A.* p. 177 f.

¹⁵² *P.* II, *A.* p. 361. Professor Butler, although he left this monastery as only a name upon an unfinished page of his manuscript intended to reopen the question of its date as a possible fourth century work. His delay in writing the discussion for this change of date still leaves the fifth century date as the safest hypothesis.

which Professor Butler mentions, but does not describe in either his field notes or other publications, is probably the "convent" which M. de Vogüé published and dated in the fifth century.¹⁵³ The plan is very compact, with compartments grouped around three sides of a central court and with the church on the south side. This interior court was entered by a narrow passage, leading directly from a small door in the north wall of the group of buildings, and had a covered passage, formed by a colonnade, on all except the south side, where a small door gave access to the church. The church was a three-aisled basilica with the same transverse system of arches as in the Basilica at Shaḡḡā, without, however, the upper galleries. Its west façade was flanked by high towers which at one time were of some defensive character.

*Umm il-Ḳuṭṭên. Monastery.*¹⁵⁴

Very different from the above, in plan and arrangement, is the large monastery of Umm il-Ḳuṭṭên which the Arabs still call id-Dêr. Here we find a large rambling group which might well be mistaken for separate residential blocks if they were not connected with one another by doorways and passages (*Ill.* 89). The chapel has the plan of an early fourth century type, with projecting apse, a longitudinal system of three bays, and had a wooden roof over the middle aisle, but no clearstorey, the side walls rising to the height of the crowns of the interior arches. To the south, and almost detached from the chapel, is the first group of monastic buildings, the only direct communication being through a chamber at the east end of the south wall of the church. This group is of very irregular plan. At its northwest angle, near the church, still stands a high tower with cruciform windows in its uppermost storey. Adjoining the tower on the south, is a small inconspicuous entrance to a close of rudely triangular shape, the west side of which is occupied by a long, narrow two-storey building, the north side by three rooms, two of which are of such irregular shape that they could never have been roofed except with flat roofs of wood; the remaining side had a single wall. At the eastern side of this irregular group is a row of long narrow chambers at right angles with the church, entered from the south end by an outstanding vestibule underneath a tower. From this entrance, one passed through the row of rooms to the chamber next to the church, and thus into the church itself. There is a doorway opening from one of this row of rooms upon the irregular close, and also one opening toward the east into a second

group of buildings. This second group was apparently erected later than the other. It consists of a large symmetrical building with a high triple-arched portico on the north giving upon an enclosed courtyard at the east end of the church. The building itself consists of two very large arched rooms one storey high, with very narrow rooms, in two storeys, behind them. The lofty and dignified porch has a narrow entrance at its east end.

*Umm is-Surab. Monastery.*¹⁵⁵ 489 A.D.

The convent of S.S. Sergios and Bacchos at Umm is-Surab is one of the most interesting in Syria. Its unusual church, with its columns and architraves and galleries and its eastern and western towers, has been described in earlier pages of this book (p. 47). North of the church is a nearly symmetrical rectangle of residential buildings (*Ill.* 45), with a paved court in the middle, entered from the east through an arched vestibule, colonnaded on all sides in two storeys and completely surrounded by rooms large and small, in one or two storeys, about twenty in all, forming an ideal monastic establishment. The church was reached from the cloister by a narrow slype between two of the rooms on the south side of the quadrangle. Beneath the pavement of the cloister court, within the rectangle formed by the colonnades, was a cistern spanned by four transverse arches which still carry the slabs of the pavement (*Ill.* 90). The columns of the cloister rest upon a low wall which follows the limits of the cistern below. The upper and lower colonnades both carry architraves, like those within the church, and the total effect of the interior of the cloister court is one of the most picturesque in all Southern Syria. The employment of columns on so elaborate a scale, though common enough in the domestic architecture of the North, was rare in the province of Arabia, and the arrangement of an interior court with two-storey colonnades on all sides is unique in the Christian architecture of both Syria and Arabia. But the capitals and the bases of all these columns are of the simplest type of the plain basket shape common enough in porticoes of the immediate neighbourhood. The plan of the two-storey colonnades was probably taken from the court of the Roman palace at Boṣṣrâ,¹⁵⁶ now called Dêr Deradjân, which was perhaps a monastery at this time, although the details were of an ordinary provincial type.

*id-Dêr. Monastery.*¹⁵⁷

As the name of the place would imply, this was the

¹⁵³ S. C., Text, p. 58, Pls. 18, 22.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. P. II, A. pp. 255—260.

¹⁵⁴ P. II, A. p. 139.

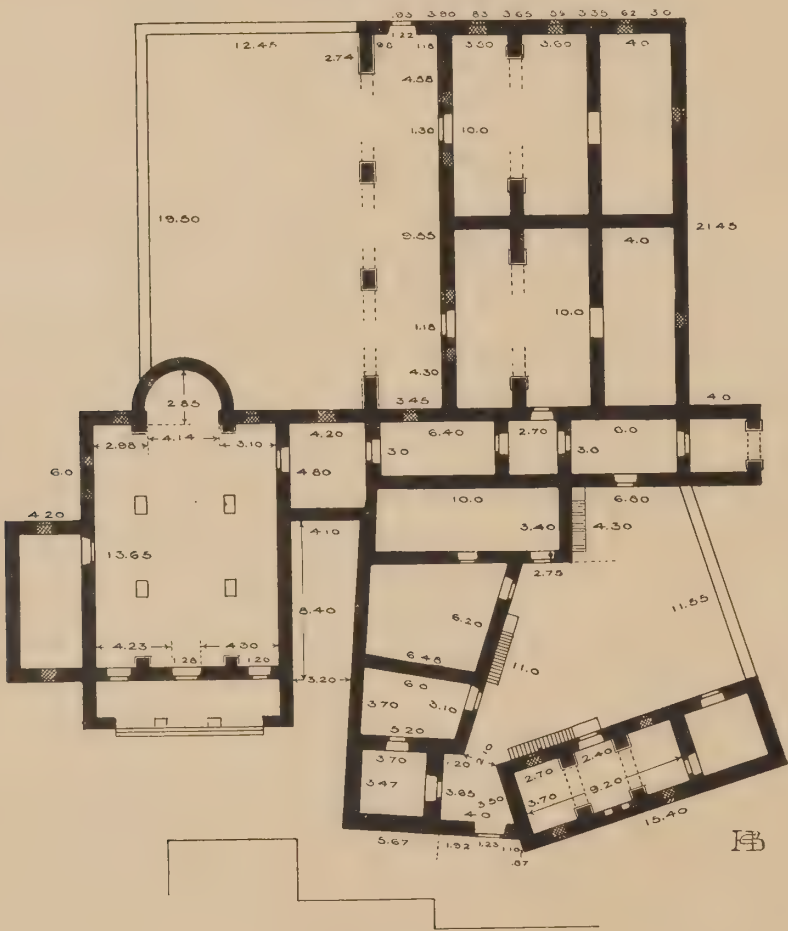
¹⁵⁷ P. II, A. pp. 102—105.

¹⁵⁵ P. II, A. p. 95.

MMIL-KVTTËN.
MONASTERY.

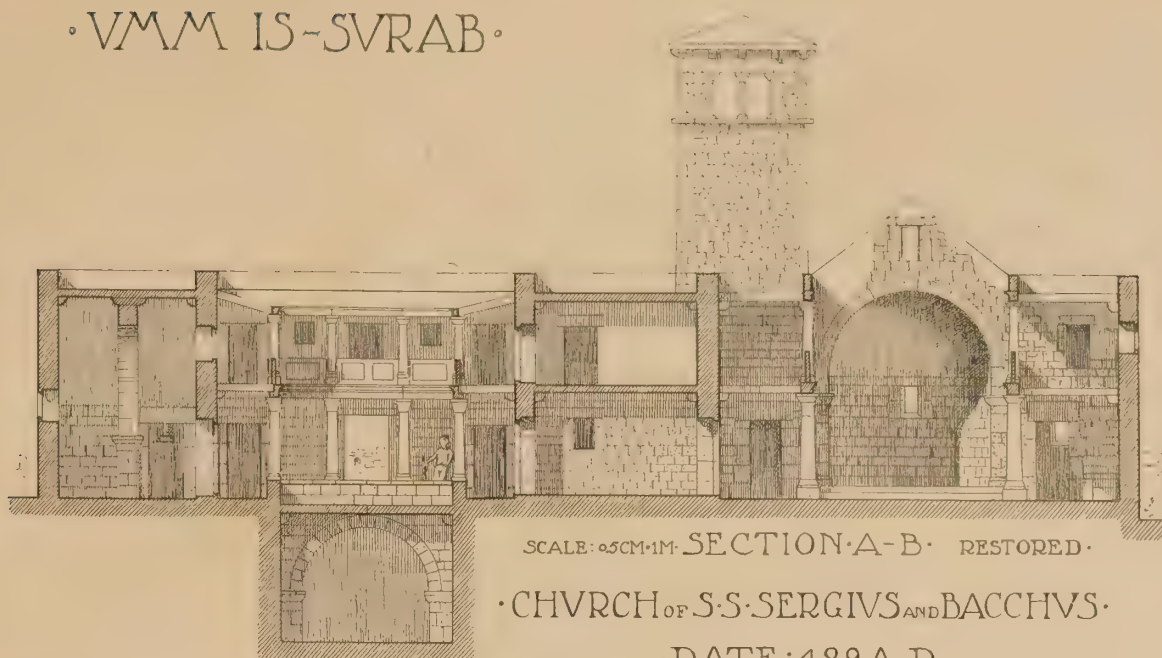


WEST FRONT.
RESTORED IN PART.



Ill. 89.

·VMM IS-SVRAB·



SCALE: 0.5CM=1M. SECTION A-B. RESTORED.

·CHVRCH OF S.S. SERGIUS AND BACCHVS·

·DATE: 489 A.D·

Ill. 90.

monastery *par excellence* of all Southern Syria, — the most dignified and the most symmetrically planned of all the monastic institutions in Syria. The convent apparently occupies the site of a Pagan temple; for fragments of Classical architecture were introduced into the structure. It has been identified tentatively by Wetzstein,¹⁵⁸ with Dêr Nedjrân, a religious establishment of considerable importance in Early Christian literature. In the later Middle Ages it was converted into a khan; it is now ruined and deserted. The plan comprises a great open atrium with a large basilical church on the east and with apartments in two storeys, symmetrically arranged, on the other three sides, and a western gateway on axis with the basilica (Ill. 91). The church presents a plan unusual in this locality before the sixth century, having a nave of five bays of longitudinal arches carried upon piers, a clearstorey and wooden roofs, and a broad apse between side chambers. On either side of the nave, at the west front, are the unusual additions of oblong chapels, each with a transverse arch dividing off a little sanctuary at its east end. These chapels can be reached only from the side aisles. Across the façade of the church and its projecting chapels extended an arcaded porch of seven arches carried upon columns. This arcade bounded the east side of a large square atrium which was enclosed on all the other sides by apartments large and small, in two or three storeys, the larger rooms having transverse arches, the smaller ones a corbel-and-beam construction. Within the enclosing

buildings was an arcade of piers one storey high, forming a covered cloister walk below and an open terrace in front of the rooms in the upper storey. This arcade was broken in the middle of the west side by the vestibule of the entrance which was carried up in the form of a high tower. The apse arch is moulded and was carried by half columns with Classical Corinthian capitals which, with their bases and shafts, were taken from some Pagan building, probably a temple, the shafts being considerably shortened. Other fragments of Classical workmanship are seen in the jambs and lintel of the main gateway. The plan and construction of the church, with the numerous longitudinal arches, its clearstorey, and its wooden roofs, are more like those of the fifth century churches of Northeastern Syria, and the presence of Classical details suggests the time of the demolition of the Pagan shrines under the emperor Theodosius II, in the same century.

*Umm idj-Djimâl. Numerianos Convent.*¹⁵⁹

There can be little doubt that the quadrangle adjoining the Church of Numerianos on the north constituted a group of monastic buildings (Ill. 115). The church itself, an edifice of unusual construction belonging to the sixth century, will be discussed in the chapter which follows this. Here we may confine the description to the residential buildings. The group stands by itself near the middle of an open common in the heart of the city. The buildings are ranged about a nearly

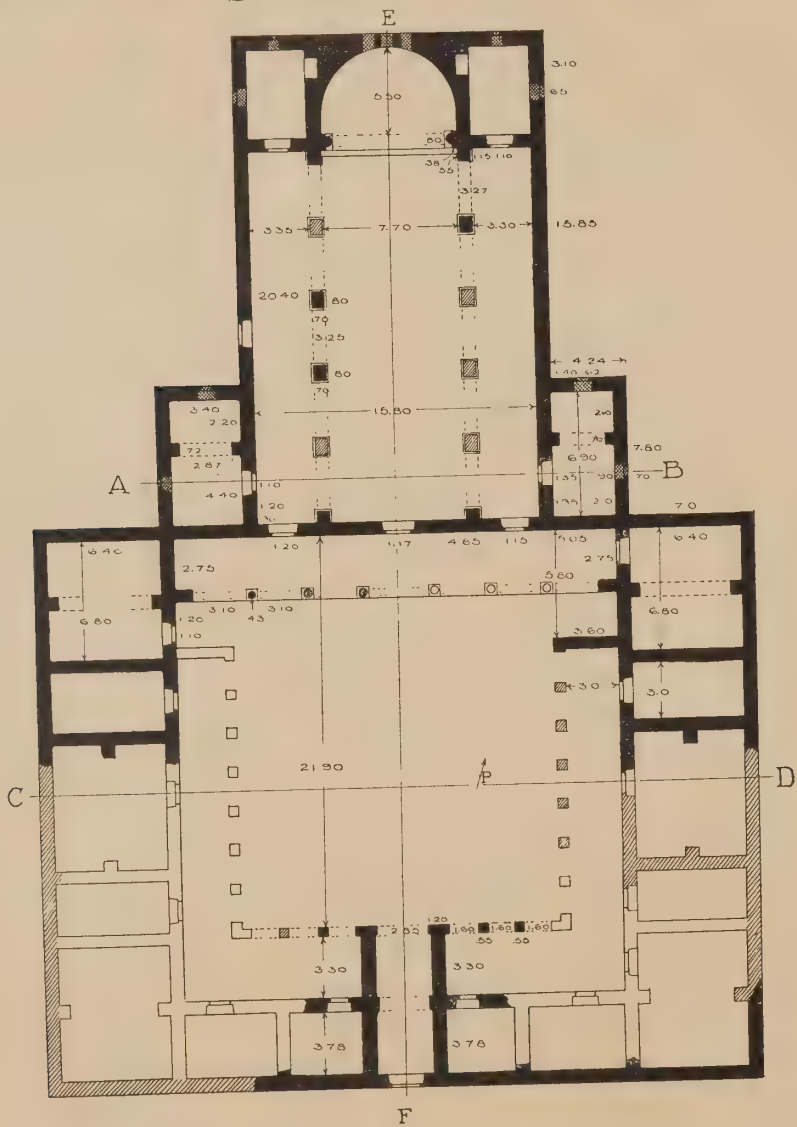
¹⁵⁸ *Reisebericht über Haurân und die Trachonen*, p. 126.

¹⁵⁹ *P. II, A. p. 191.*

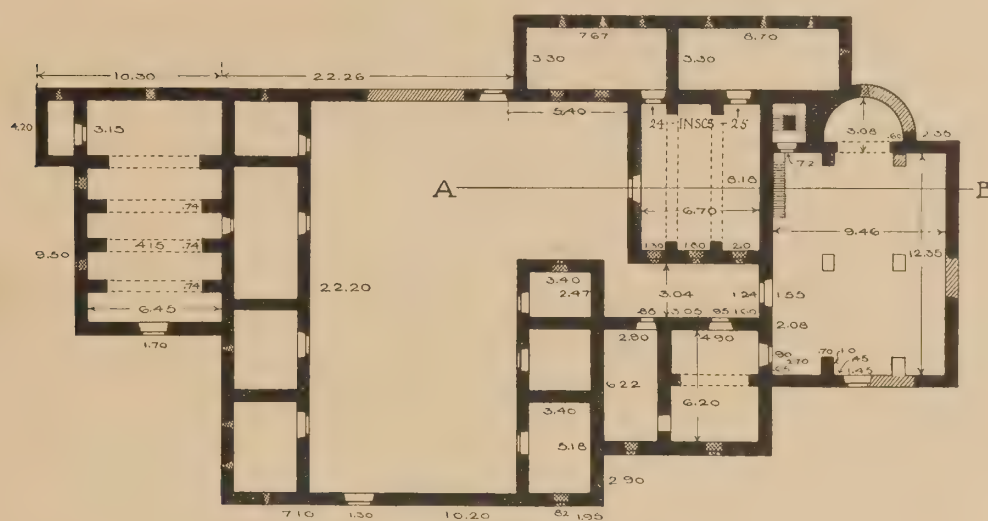
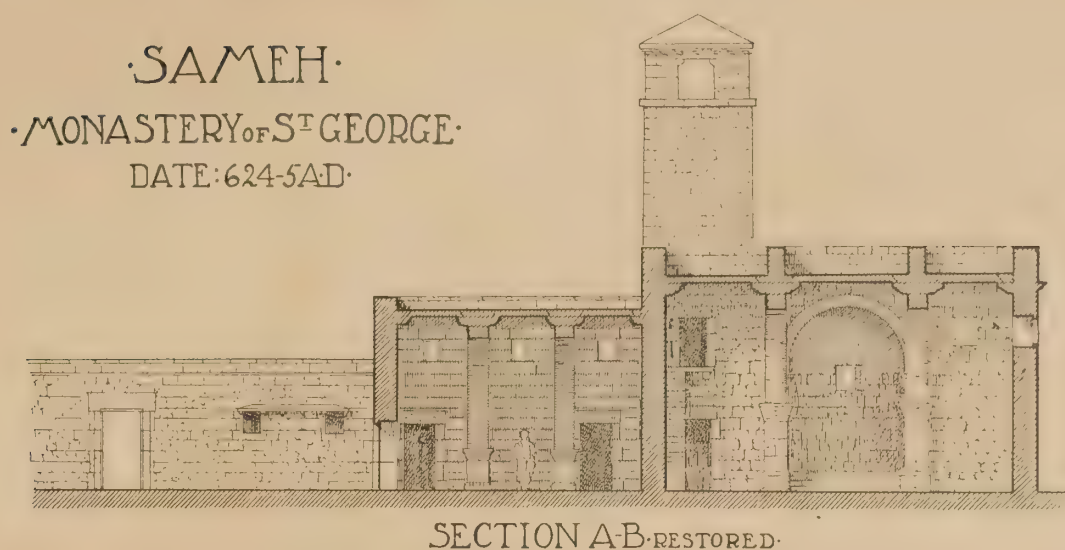
ID-DÊR.
MONASTERY.



SECTION A-B RESTORED.



Ill. 91.



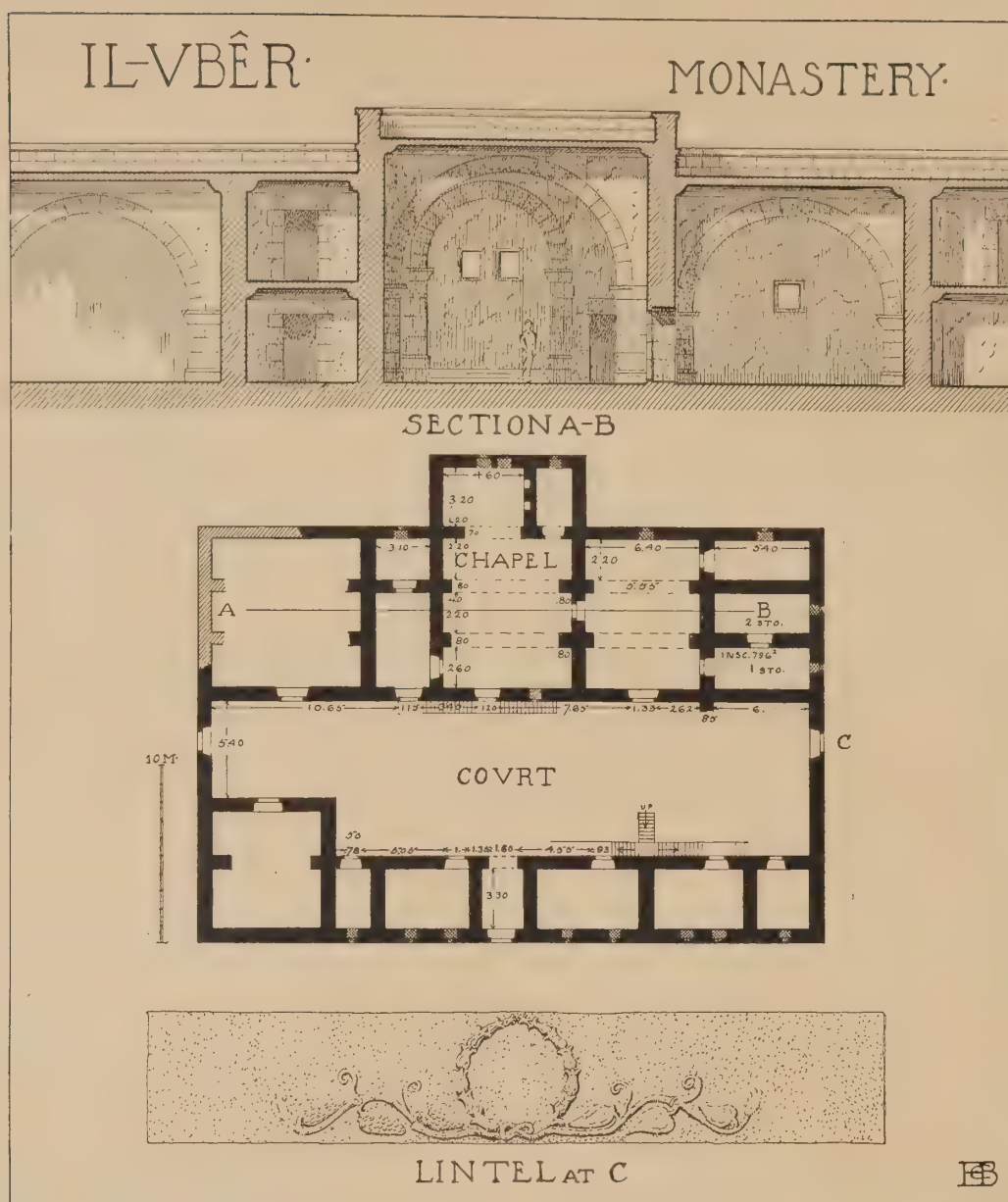
symmetrical court with a large circular cistern in the middle, the cistern having been covered originally with slabs on a level with the pavement of the court. The rooms are all small, only those next to the church and on the east being two storeys high. A tower of three storeys occupied the northeast angle of the group. The entrance to the quadrangle was at its southwest angle adjoining the church.

*Sameh. Monastery of "Saint George".*¹⁶⁰ 624/5 A.D.

This monastery is notable as containing one of the latest dated inscriptions in the regions discussed in this volume, inscriptions written ten years after the Hegira, and only a little while before the fall of Boṣrā to the Moslems. The inscriptions do not record the founding of the religious establishment, and perhaps indicate only repairs or rebuilding of some part of the group. The main church here is on the south side

again (Ill. 92). It is a simple structure of three nearly equal aisles divided by two sets of two longitudinal arches, having a partly protruding apse with a chamber on the north side, within which is a crude stair which rises from the second storey and leads up into a tower about twelve or fifteen metres high. A slype, between the buildings on the north of the church, leads from the north aisle into a large court, bounded on the north by other monastic buildings and on the east and west by single walls. The great room next to the church at its east end is the room with the dated inscriptions in it. It is spanned by two high girder arches which are still in place. Beyond this, two long, narrow rooms protrude eastward from the main group. On the north side of the court are four rooms, one of which opens toward the north upon a chapel in the form of a hall church of five bays, the transverse arches of which are still in place. This chapel has a

¹⁶⁰ P. II, A. p. 83 f. The inscription begins, *O Lord, God of St. George help (us)*, (P. III, 24), and does not necessarily mean that the monastery was dedicated to the Saint.



Ill. 93.

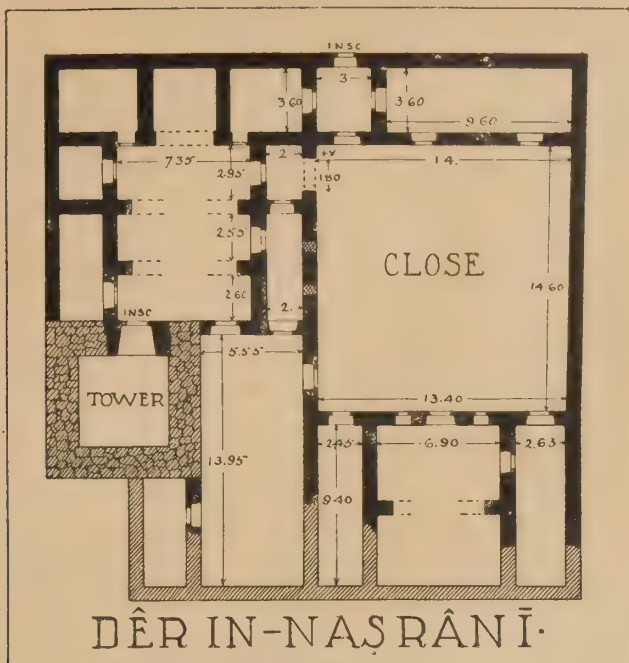
rectangular sanctuary with a little side chamber projecting on the north. The chapel is probably earlier than the church on the south side of the group, being of the same general form as several of the earliest church buildings in Southern Syria.

*il-Ubêr. Monastery.*¹⁶¹

In all the monasteries which have been discussed thus far in these pages, the church or chapel of the establishment has figured as a prominent feature in the plan, occupying one side of the monastic group. In the two monasteries which follow, the buildings form a compact, symmetrical enclosure in the midst of which the chapel is comparatively unimportant.

Il-Ubêr is situated in the Ledja (Trachonitis) in a small, fertile spot in the midst of that wilderness of lava. The monastery buildings compose a rectangle thirty-five metres long and twenty-three metres wide (Ill. 93), and the rectangular sanctuary of the chapel projects from the long east side. Within, there is a long narrow court flanked by a row of narrow rooms on the west and by deep buildings on the east. The main entrance is beneath a tower in the middle of the west side, and there are doorways in the end walls of the long court. Directly opposite the main entrance is the front wall of the chapel, indistinguishable from the fronts of the buildings on either side of it. The chapel is spanned by two transverse arches.

¹⁶¹ P. II, A. p. 426.



Ill. 94.

At its east end is a rectangular sanctuary with one side chamber on the south which is entered from the nave. This lack of symmetry throws the chancel arch off from the axis of the chapel. South of the chapel is a large room with two transverse arches, and beyond this, three narrow rooms in two storeys. North of the chapel are a larger and a smaller room each two storeys high, and next to these, another large arched room. The rooms on the opposite side of the court are all two storeys high, except a large room in the north-west angle which has a single girder arch. This building is beautifully constructed throughout, and one lintel was found with delicate relief carving upon it.

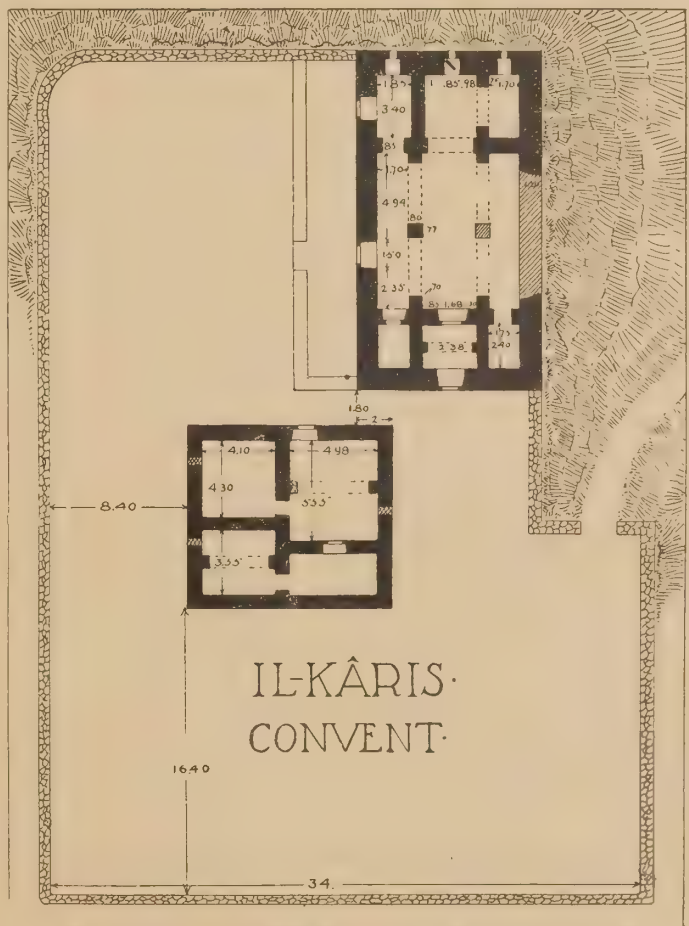
Dêr in-Naṣrânî. Monastery of S.S. Sergios and Bacchos. ¹⁶²

This monastery crowns a high conical eminence in the southeastern foothills of the Djebel Ḥaurân. It was built beside a very ancient watch tower, and, like the tower before it, was a landmark looking out over the stony waste to the southeast. The small, but compact group of buildings stands alone on the hilltop. As inscription names the place as a monastery, and calls for the blessing of Syria's two famous brother martyrs. The group is nearly square (*III*. 94). On the south is the close with buildings upon all sides but the south. The entrance is in a small, square vestibule near the middle of the east side; this leads into an angle of the close. Beside the vestibule is a long room filling out the west side of the close. On the opposite side is a large arched room with narrow rooms in

two storeys flanking it. On the north side of the quadrangle are two small rooms, one of which is an arched vestibule connecting with the chapel. The chapel itself consists of an undivided nave spanned by two arches, and having a square sanctuary toward the east. On either side of the chancel arch are narrow doorways leading into large, projecting side chambers; but the space on either side, to the west of the projections, is taken up by narrow chambers which flank the nave. Westward from the chapel is the ancient tower and a long room which is now in complete ruins. Here, as at il-Ubêr, the chapel is sequestered in the midst of the monastic group and must have been lighted by openings above the roofs of the chambers which flank the nave.

Il-Kâris. Monastery. ¹⁶³

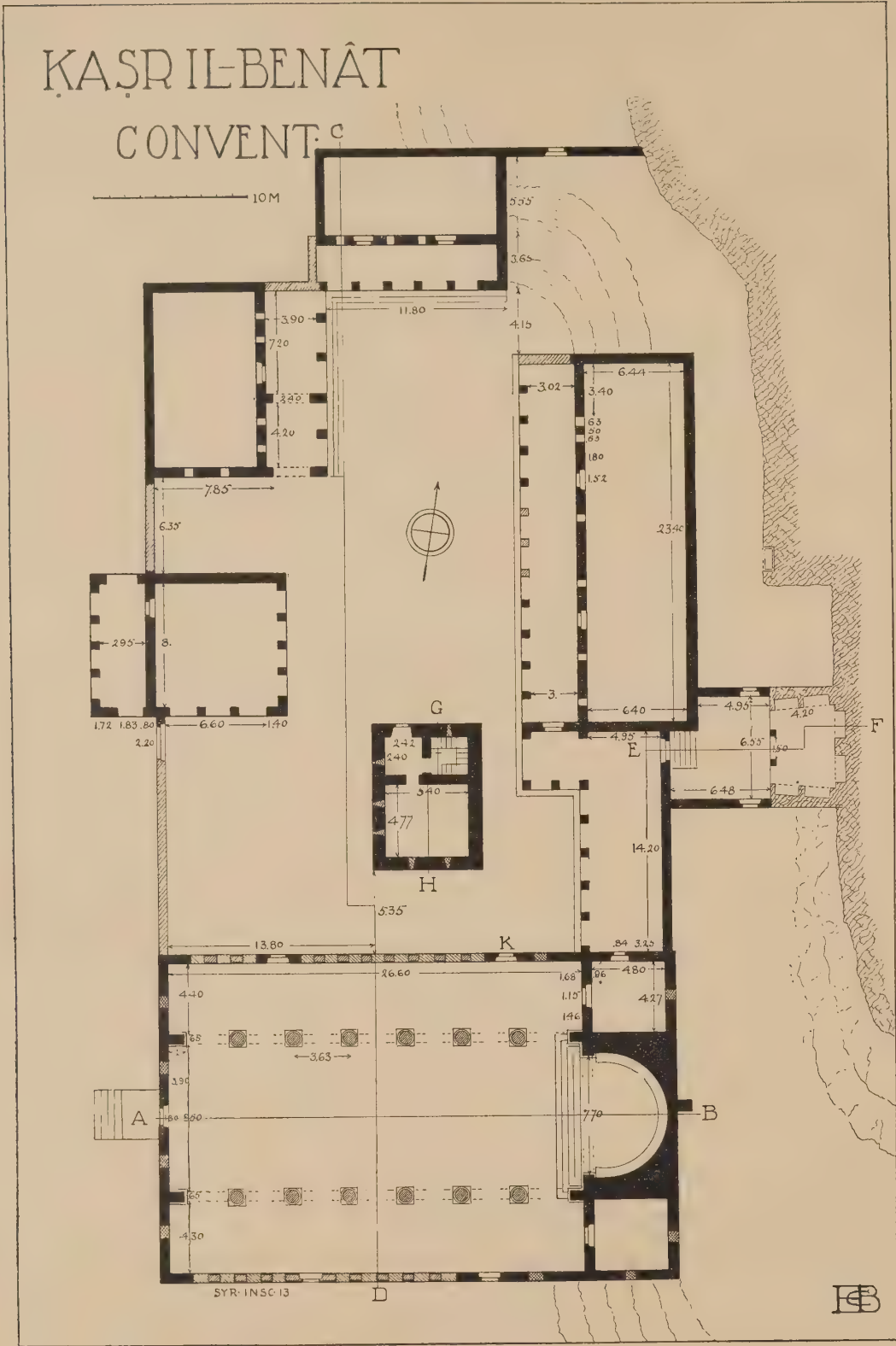
Here we have a totally different kind of monastery, a sort of fortified convent, consisting of a chapel and a small unattached residential building, both within a stoutly walled temenos, perched upon the top of a hill. The walls of the church are of double thickness, and its plan is unusual (*III*, 95). Here we have a short



Ill. 95.

162 *P.* II, A. p. 334.

163 *P.* II, A. p. 331.



III. 96.

nave spanned by two longitudinal arches on either side, an enclosed, arched narthex between towerlike pavillions at the ends of the arcades, and a square sanctuary between side chambers, one of which opens upon the sanctuary by a broad arch. It is not impossible that the arches of the nave were in two storeys, so that there may have been galleries over the aisles. The domestic building was nearly square,

but was irregularly divided within into one large and three smaller rooms, one of which was two storeys high. There can be little doubt that this stoutly built church with its walled enclosure and its compact residential building hard by, all isolated from other habitation and placed upon a lonely crag, was a monastic institution for the accommodation of a small body of monks.

3. MONASTERIES OF NORTHERN SYRIA

THE religious establishments of Northern Syria represent a different type of monastic institution from any of those we have seen in the South. In almost all the monasteries, that are to be recognized at once as such, the church is the most conspicuous and lavishly decorated building. Many of these monastic groups, as has been said above, are made up, in large part, of inns for the accommodation of pilgrims, and it is not always easy to recognize the domestic buildings of the cenobites from the hostels, for the reason that no special form seems to have been adopted for this purpose.

*Ḳaṣr il-Benât. Convent.*¹⁶⁴ *Circ. 425 A.D.*

The large, monastic institution at Ḳaṣr il-Benât is situated above the great Roman road that connected Antioch with the eastern provinces, and upon a part of that road which led from Antioch toward the shrine of Saint Simeon Stylites at *Telneshē*. Indeed, it lay about half way between the great city and the shrine of the famous pillar-saint. The church, which has been described in a previous chapter (p. 53) was built in fulfillment of a vow, and designed by the architect Kyrios, about the time when Simeon mounted his first pillar, at the end of the first quarter of the fifth century.¹⁶⁵ But one would gather from the "lives" of the saint that large numbers of pilgrims were wont to resort to his *mandra* for several years before he ascended his column, and it may be that the monastery at Ḳaṣr il-Benât was established at this particular point on the road because it was a convenient halting place, at the end of about two days journey, as pilgrims go, from Antioch. The road at this point passes through a defile between the northern foothills of the Djebel Bārishā and the Djebel Ḥalaḳah. The convent is placed upon a natural platform high above the road, and is surrounded by a semicircle of steep hills. A road branching to the left, or north of the main highway,

mounted steeply to the convent. The church rises directly above the highway, on the edge of the platform; behind it looms a great tower over 30 m. high. The road to the monastery passed in front of the church and terminated at a gateway on the west side of the close. The enclosure is as wide as the church is long i. e. about 35 m.; the church bounds it on the south, and it extends northward about 45 m., with buildings irregularly placed on all sides (*Ill.* 96). The great tower, set on the transverse axis of the church and very near it on the north, dominates the group. Northward from the diaconicon of the church extends a row of rectangular piers which, with the east wall of the enclosure, carried a roof and formed a covered walk which terminated to the north against the end of a long three-storey structure with open loggias of rectangular piers extending along its west face. This is the principal building of the monastery. At the end of the covered walk, and on the south side is a doorway opening out to the east into a narrow enclosure and a flight of steps that leads up to a rock-hewn tomb chamber. At the north end of the close is another three-storey building with loggias or galleries, about half as long as the east building, and, adjoining this, but facing east, in the northwest angle, a similar structure in three storeys. These three buildings are typical of a large class of residential structures connected with the monasteries of the North. They appear to have had no interior partition walls, yet they have more than one entrance. The high walls were less well constructed than the loggias which were built in three storeys on upright monolithic piers carrying plain architraves, and having plain panels between the piers of the upper storeys. Some of these loggias are preserved to the top (*Ill.* 97). The building on the west side of the close is different from the others. It had a three-storey portico projecting beyond the west wall of the close. Within this the building was nearly

¹⁶⁴ *P. II, B.* pp. 214—223.

¹⁶⁵ *The Life of St. Simeon Stylites.* A translation from the Syriac by Rev. F. Lent, in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 35, Part II (1915) pp. 103—198.



Ill. 97. Kaṣr il-Benât. Convent. North Building, exterior from the South.

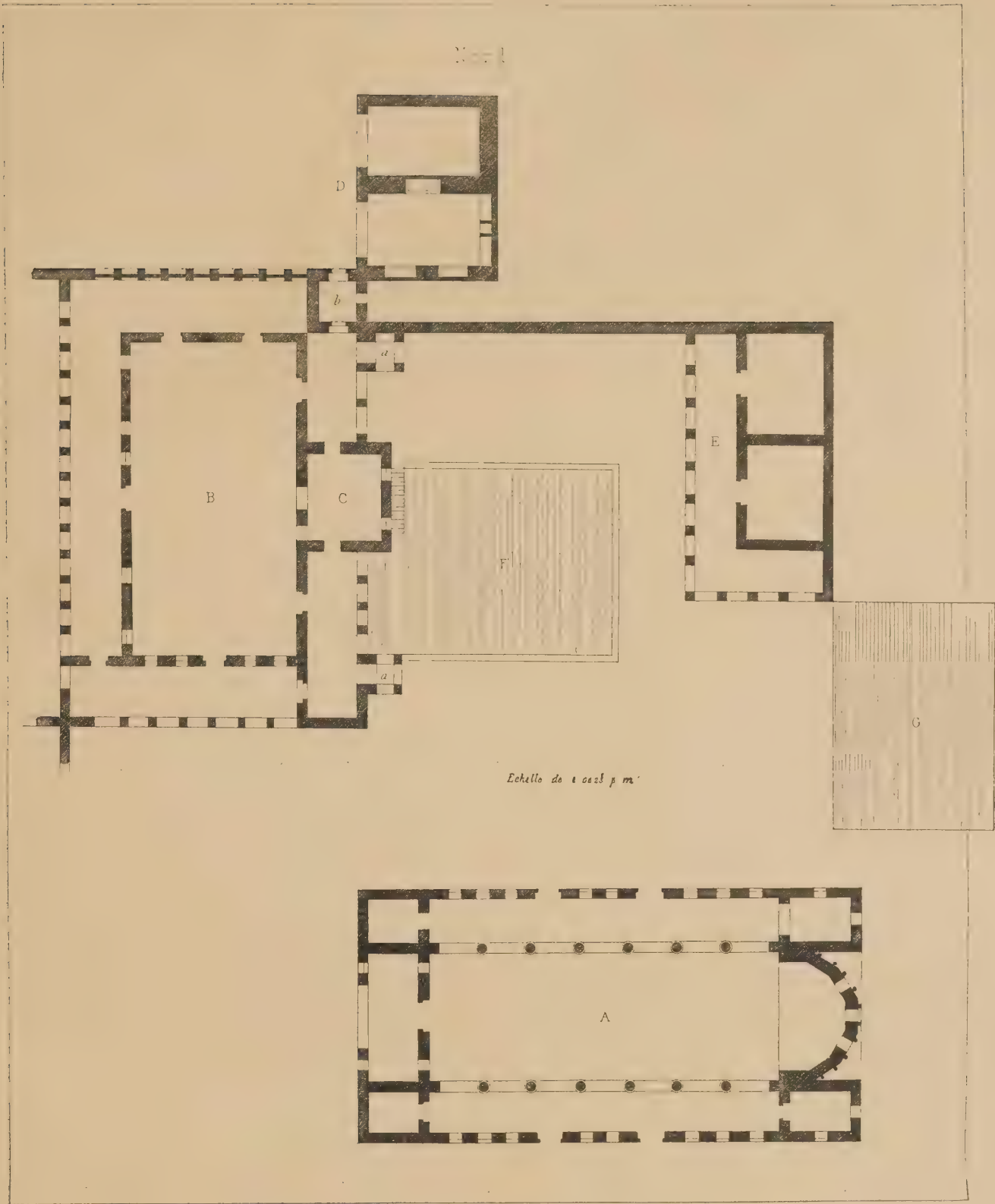
square. The east and south sides were composed of rows of rectangular piers carrying stone beams, so that these two sides were open to the air; but the upper stories appear to have been of ordinary walls with windows in them. The lower storey would appear to have been a reception hall of some sort, for the main entrance to the enclosure is just beside it. The tower was divided by walls into one large and two small apartments, one of the latter containing a stone stair which ascended to the top of the structure.

*Dêr Termānîn. Monastery.*¹⁶⁶

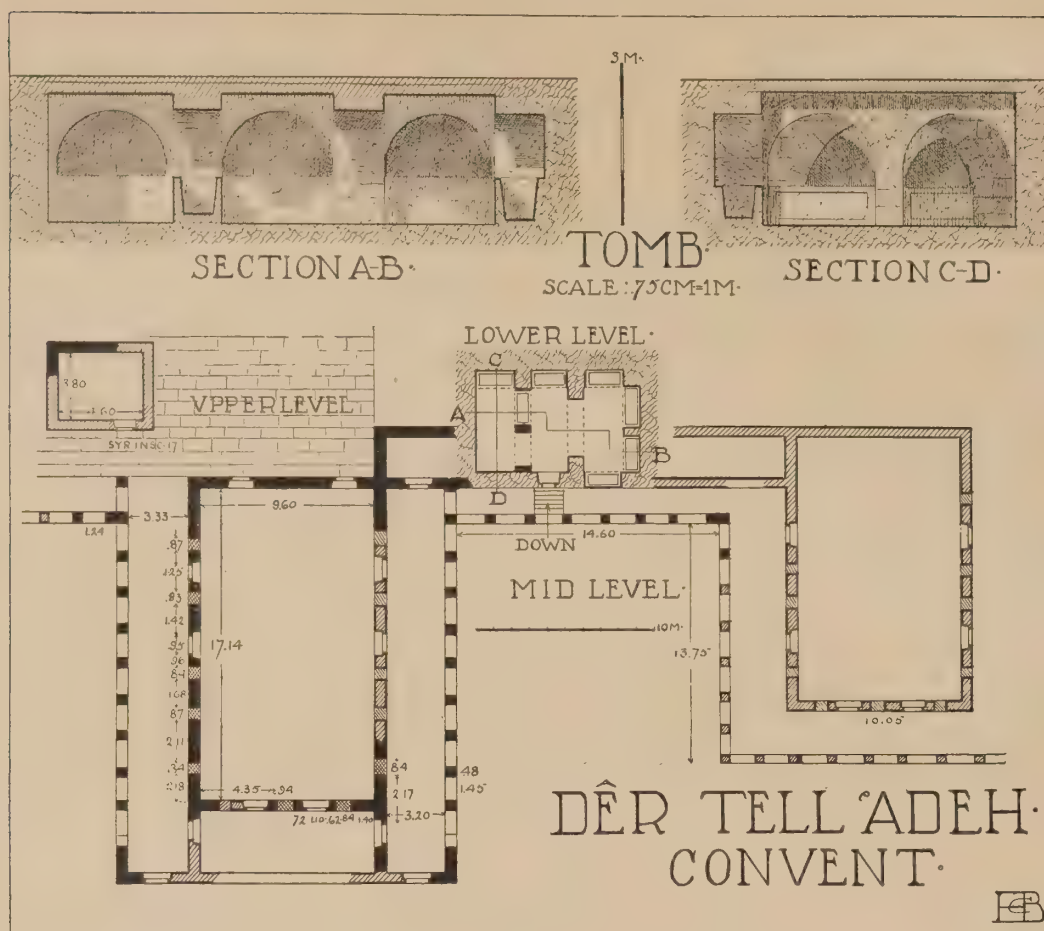
Another stage of the journey from Antioch to Ǧalʿat Simʿân would bring the pilgrims to a place just beyond the point where the pilgrim road branched off from the main highway in the valley and ascended into the hills. This was at Dêr Termānîn. The convent exists today only in the dismantled ruins of its huge inn; its splendid church was not long ago one of the principal glories of Syrian architecture, which was elaborately published by M. de Vogüé, and which has been used again and again as an illustration of the church architecture of the East, but has been broken up and carried away to rebuild the modern village of Termānîn on the edge of the plain. This church, which was erected in the sixth century, is discussed in the

following chapter. For the moment, it is the monastic group as a whole that has interest for us. The monastery occupied the crest of a knoll, and a branch road curved up from the southwest and terminated at the north side of the group in front of two outstanding buildings of which one was a somewhat elaborate tomb structure. To the right was the great pandoecheion (*Ill. 98-B*) or inn, for pilgrims; eastward from this was a residential building E with a large reservoir lying between it and the inn; and to the south, on the crest of the knoll, was the large and beautiful church. The group was surrounded by a stout wall which is not shown in M. de Vogüé's plan. The pandoecheion is a large building, about 23 m. by 35 m. over all. It consisted of a well built structure, two storeys high, surrounded by a two-storey peristyle of monolithic piers. The walls are still extant; but the porches which are shown in M. de Vogüé's sketch have been taken away. The continuity of the peristyle was broken at the northeast angle by a walled vestibule which was the principal entrance to the monastery, and the lower storey of the peristyle on the north side, adjoining the vestibule, was provided with a parapet. The porch on the east flank was also interrupted by a square structure projecting from the main building. In the opposite angle of the enclosure was a residence

¹⁶⁶ S. C. Pl. 130—136: A. II, p. 196.



Ill. 98. Dêr Termānîn. Monastery, plan of Pandocheion and Church (after de Vogüé).



Ill. 99.

of two rooms of two storeys each with a double set of piers in front and on the south side. This was probably the clerical residence.

Dêr Tell-^cAdeh. ¹⁶⁷ (*Teleda*).

Still farther along in the direction of *Ḳal'at Sim'an*, but not upon one of the pilgrim routes, stand the ruins of this monastery which was one of the oldest and most famous in Northern Syria. Its location, high up on the southern foot of the *Djebel Shêkh Berekât*, gave it a commanding position overlooking the *Sermedâ* plain and the lower hills of the *Djebel Ḥalaḳah*. It is often referred to in Syriac literature as the "Great Convent of Teleda," and the names of the abbots are found in the lists of those attending the councils of the Church. The ruins, which are much delapidated, are unmistakably those of a monastery; but there are no remains that are to be recognized as those of a church or chapel. The group of monastic buildings was set upon two terraces cut into the hillside; the buildings upon the upper terrace are ruined beyond recognition, and a chapel of no great size may once have existed here. The lower, or south terrace con-

tained two large buildings of the "pandocheion" type, both set against the wall of the upper terrace, and having a court between them (Ill. 99). These large structures were two or three storeys high, had open loggias of monolithic piers, and were connected by a covered walk at the north end of the court. From the middle of this connecting passage a stair leads down to a large tomb chamber with six arcosolia and several independent sarcophagi all cut out of the solid rock. The chamber was spanned by well built transverse arches, and was roofed with stone slabs all of which are in place. It may be that the chapel of the monastery stood on the upper terrace, directly above this tomb, and that it entirely collapsed with the giving way of the terrace wall. The buildings, for the most part, are much older than the dated inscriptions in Syriac which lie in the ruins, and which are among the latest dated Christian inscriptions in Syria. The earlier of the two dates upon the ruined gateway of the convent is 601; the later date on this same portal is 907, and a ruined tower bears an inscription dated 941. These two tenth century inscriptions, together with a ninth century inscription

¹⁶⁷ P. II, s. p. 243 f.

found at Burdj is-Seb^c about a mile distant, and an eighth century inscription from Kefr Lâb in the Djebel Sim^cân, are the only evidence we have that any of the Christian buildings in Northern Syria were in use after the Mohammedan conquest. All these inscriptions are in Syriac, suggesting that Greek was no longer in use. The convent of *Teleda* was Jacobite and strongly nationalistic in its tendencies. It would seem that this famous old institution, like one in Aleppo, and another in Reşâfah on the Euphrates, was able to make terms with the Moslem rulers for the continuance of its existence which few Christian communities in Syria could secure. Parts of the ruins are as early at least as the beginning of the fifth century. The great crypt-like tomb chamber undoubtedly contained the bones of many high dignitaries, even saints perhaps, for one of the inscriptions refers to the monastery as "*this holy place*."

*Convent of Saint Simeon Stylites.*¹⁶⁸ *Ḳal'at Sim'ân*, (*Telneshē* or *Telanissos*).

As all roads in Northern Syria lead to Ḳal'at Sim'ân, so does the history of Syrian architecture lead up to the building of the great church and monastery which were erected at the foot of Saint Simeon's pillar. There are three names which stand out with particular prominence in the Christian period of Syria's history, the names of three Syrians who were especially venerated by their countrymen and became famous throughout Christendom, Sergios the Martyr, John of Antioch, called Chrysostomos, preacher and prelate in his native city and Patriarch of Constantinople, and Simeon the Stylite, a late contemporary of Saint John Chrysostom, who astounded the world by his ascetic practices, and centred the attention of all the Christian, and parts of the Pagan, world upon himself during the better part of half a century by living on the top of a column for a period only thirty months short of two score years. Nor was the fame of his extraordinary career quickly forgotten; we know that the cult established in the monastery which was the scene of his strange ascetic life not only grew in numbers and influence during the century and a half between Saint Simeon's death and the fall of Christian power in Syria, but was extended by the multiplication of monasteries and by imitation on the part of other ascetics who adopted the peculiar form of solitary life — of being in the world but not of it — which involved living upon a column, or on the top

of some isolated tower. The life of Saint Simeon, so far as dates and his living upon a pillar are concerned, is well attested by such documents as *The life of St. Simeon Stylites* in Bedjan's *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, recently translated into English by the Rev. Frederick Lent,¹⁶⁹ which is a contemporary account, and by Evagrius' *Ecclesiastical History* which was written about a century after Saint Simeon's death by an eye-witness of the shrine and of the pilgrimages.

Simeon was born of well-to-do Christian parents of the farmer class, in the region of Nikopolis in Northern Syria, a little before 390. In boyhood he tended the flocks of his father. "He was radiant of countenance, and fair of face, and gentle and benevolent. In stature he was small, but in strength lusty, . . . and he won favour with everybody". When he was hardly more than a lad, his parents died, leaving some property to Simeon and his brother, and soon after this he inherited a fortune from a wealthy paternal aunt. In the year 403 Simeon divided his inheritance among the poor and the convents, providing especially for the convent of Mar Eusebona which he presently entered. Here he spent nine years, provoking such jealousy among his brother monks by his extreme ascetic practices, that he finally left the monastery, and wandered toward the north until he reached a small convent in *Telneshē*. Here they presently built for him a cell on a neighbouring hilltop where he spent ten years, attracting disciples and working miracles. Then he took up the practice of living on the top of pillars erected for him within an enclosure which had been built around the cell; first upon three low ones in succession, but of increasing height, during a period of more than seven years, and finally upon a column, 40 cubits¹⁷⁰ high, from which he never descended, and upon which he spent the remaining 30 years of his life. Saint Simeon died in September 459.

The great monastery was first called to the attention of scholars and the general public by the late Marquis de Vogüé who visited the site in 1862, and devoted a number of plates in *La Syrie Centrale*¹⁷¹ to illustrations of the church, its dependencies, and its details. Since that time numerous travellers have visited Ḳal'at Sim'ân, and, in 1899, the American Expedition took a large number of photographs of the monastery, many of which were published in 1902.¹⁷² The great cruciform church, with its hypaethral octagon in the middle, is unique in the history of architecture, and is not only the most beautiful and important existing monument

¹⁶⁸ S. C. Pls. 139—148. A. II, pp. 184—190. P. II, B. p. 281, Pls. XXIII and XXIV.

¹⁶⁹ *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. Vol. 35. 1915, p. 103 f.

¹⁷⁰ Note: This probably means the local cubit of .308 M. making 19 metres, or about 40 feet.

¹⁷¹ S. C. Pls. 139—148.

¹⁷² A. II, pp. 119—190.

of architecture between the buildings of the Roman period of the second century and the great church of Sta. Sophia of Justinian's time, but also from the point of view of architecture as an art by itself, regardless of engineering feats, marble incrustations and mosaic decorations, is the most monumental Christian building earlier than the masterpieces of the eleventh and twelfth centuries in Northern Europe. This monument of Christian architecture seems to the writer to represent a revival of Hellenistic art by men who, though aliens in part, were no longer strangers, and who had inherited no preconceived, national notions of architectural forms, though they had preserved certain definite national, or racial, ideas of ornament which might be applied to architecture. If we could but recover a few fragments of the Christian architecture of Antioch, we should probably find that the church of Saint Simeon was only a reflection of the architecture of the capital city. The Antioch of Seleukos and Antiochos was certainly a pure product of Hellenistic art, which art itself had developed, in large measure, upon Asiatic soil, and was never free from Oriental influences, as, indeed, the Greek art of the fifth century had not been free from such influences. As the art of Antioch developed, it is reasonable to assume that its Oriental elements increased with the growing infusion of Asiatic blood into its population. The taking over of Syria as a Roman province could have had no important effect upon the development of the art of Antioch; for Rome had much more to learn from Antioch than to teach her in the first century before Christ. The establishment of Christianity would have tended to strengthen the Oriental elements in the architecture of Antioch, and it is just this stage of development which seems to be expressed in the church at Ẓal'at Sim'an.

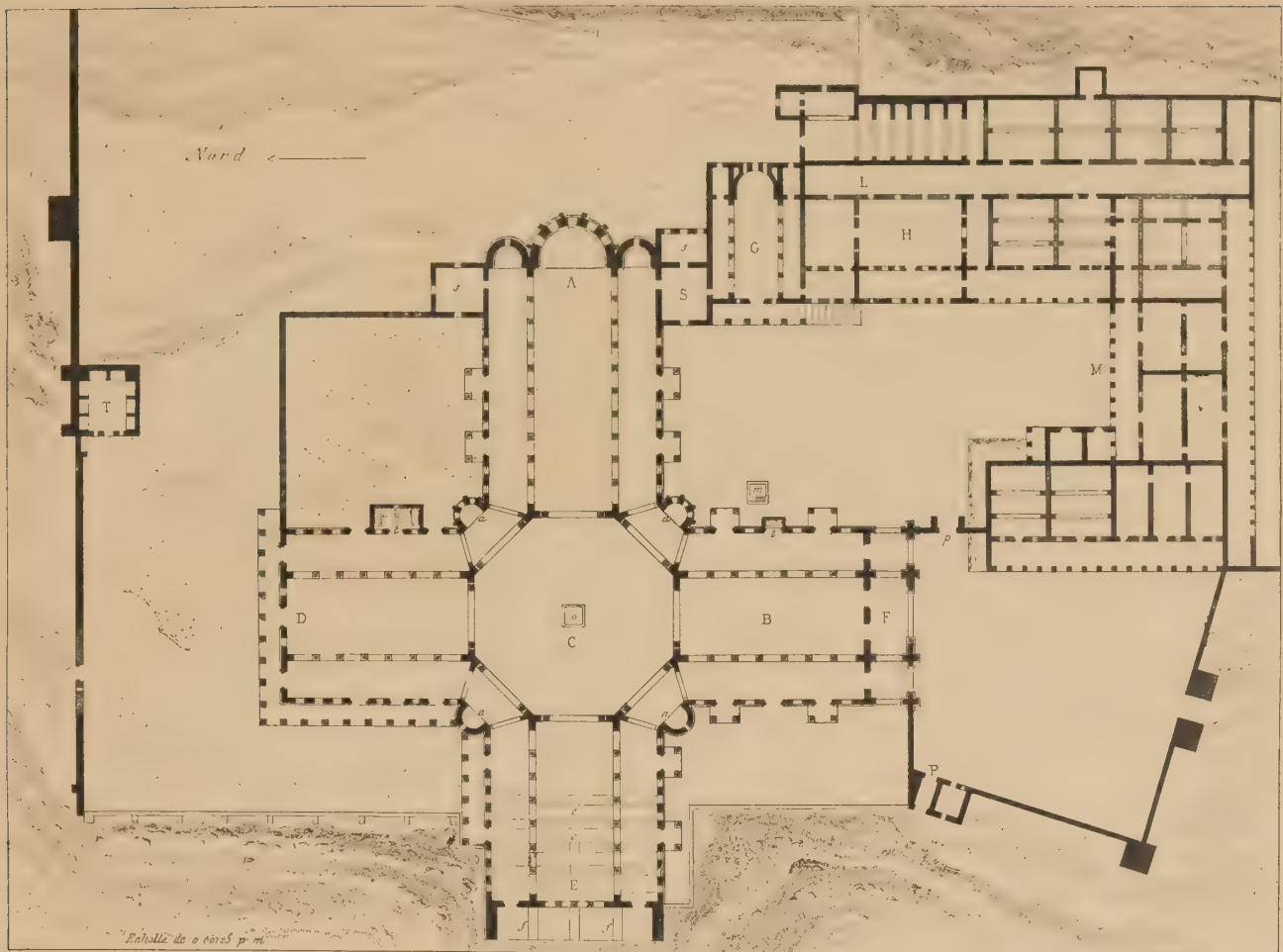
The precise date of the church of Saint Simeon is not known. No inscription, dated or undated, has been found upon the church itself, and yet it may be that inscriptions are to be found under the ruins, on fallen stones, or worked into the mosaics of the pavement. M. de Vogüé assigned the church to the fifth century, and several later scholars, judging by comparisons with other monuments, have assigned it to the sixth; but we are now in possession of much more evidence, in the form of dated buildings and architectural details, which point to the earlier dating as the correct one. In the absence of a definite date one is obliged to draw inferences from one of at least two points of view; one which sees in Ẓal'at Sim'an a final summing up of the entire history of Christian architecture in Syria, and the other which holds it to

be an early expression of all the latent potentialities of Syrian style, later diffused from Ẓal'at Sim'an as a centre over all Northern Syria. The church of Saint Simeon undoubtedly had a profound influence upon all the ecclesiastical architecture in Syria which followed it. There was probably not a priest or deacon, architect or builder, in all Northern Syria, who had not made the pilgrimage to the Holy Mountain, and every Syrian in any way interested in church building must have looked upon Saint Simeon's as the supreme example of a religious structure. Antioch itself probably had few, if any churches that surpassed it. Even the "Great Church", called the *Apostolica*, begun by Constantine and completed by his son Constantius, although extravagantly rich in incrustations of marble, and so lavishly ornamented with gold as to have received the name *Dominicum aureum*¹⁷³, was probably inferior as a monument of architecture, as all of Constantine's churches appear to have been. Antioch adored Simeon living and claimed him dead, transporting his body to the "Golden Church" — the only saint or martyr ever to receive that honour — begging the emperor, who desired to carry the relics to Constantinople, to be permitted to keep them "that he may be a wall for us and we may be protected by his prayers", since the walls of the city had fallen in an earthquake of the year of Saint Simeon's death, 459 A.D.¹⁷⁴ So that, whether we assume that the church was built before, or after Saint Simeon's death, it must remain the result of a supreme effort, both financial and artistic, on the part of the Christians of Antioch, rather than a summing up of a provincial style, and is probably to be looked upon as a reflection of the architecture of the metropolis beside the Orontes. It has been noted above that there are no churches in Northern Syria with inscriptions dated between 431 and 472; this, of course, does not signify that no churches were erected during that period of forty years, but it does suggest that fewer churches were being erected, and it seems not at all unlikely that the church building activity of the region was being focussed upon the great church of St. Simeon during a part at least of that period, let us say between 450 and 470.

The conventual buildings were certainly built during St. Simeon's lifetime; for the Life of St. Simeon abounds in references to buildings of large extent. In one passage a great assemblage is commanded by the Saint to retire into the monastery for the night, in another the Saint chides a vast throng for running to the shelter of the porticoes to escape the rain they have just prayed for and which he has just prevailed upon God

¹⁷³ Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie et de Liturgie*, III, "Antioche", col. 2373.

¹⁷⁴ *Life of St. Simeon*, op cit., p. 197.



III. 100. *Kal'at Sim'ân. Convent and Church of St. Simeon Stylites. Plan (after de Vogüé).*

A, apse; *B*, southern basilica; *C*, base of St. Simeon's pillar; *D*, north portals; *E*, western basilica, totally destroyed; *F*, narthex of southern basilica; *G*, small church, probably of fifth century; *H*, residential buildings; *L*, open passages; *M*, domestic buildings; *P*, gate in wall of inclosure; *S*, diaconicum; *s*, prothesis; *T*, mortuary chapel.

to produce. The writer of the biography frequently refers to the enclosure about the column, but refrains from describing it. Evagrius recounts the fact that the women were not permitted to enter the enclosure, but were allowed to contemplate a beautiful star which could be seen through a window. One can easily find excellent reasons for not permitting women to enter the enclosure while Saint Simeon was still alive; but it is difficult to imagine a good cause for prohibiting their entrance after the pillar had become the sole object of veneration, especially when one considers the important part played by women in the life of the Syrian Church.

The plan of the church, being unique, gives no aid in the matter of dating the edifice, but there is no element in the ornamental detail that is not dateable within the second half of the fifth century by comparison with other monuments. Many of these details appear separately in dated monuments of the second quarter of century, so that it is not impossible that the great octagon and the four basilicas were begun,

or even completed, while Saint Simeon still stood upon his column. Referring to the last of Simeon's lower pillars, Bedjan writes, "it stood in the northwest angle of the mandra." This is interesting because we find, in the northwest angle of the court between the eastern and western arms of the church (III. 100) a rock-hewn base, (*m* on plan) not unlike that of the great pillar within the octagon, but having steps cut in one side. On the east side of the court, directly on axis with this rock-hewn base is a much ruined church of medium size which, judging from its details, was certainly erected during the lifetime of the Saint. The eastwall of the south arm of the great church, directly adjoining the rock-hewn base, is itself cut out of the solid rock, on both sides, to a height of over a metre, showing that all this part of the hill-top was originally of solid rock from one to two metres higher than it is today. The biographer narrates that the three great stones which composed Saint Simeon's last column were quarried just outside the door of the *mandra*, which probably means from the north side of this

wall. It therefore seems quite certain that this wall, and the south wall of the east arm of the church, follow the lines of the wall of the original *mandra*. As to the column itself, it is said by all contemporary and early writers who touch upon the subject, to have been 40 cubits high, which is probably to be reckoned in cubits 30.5 centimetres, making 12.20 metres or about 40 feet; The Babylonian cubit of .555 M., or even the Byzantine unit of .375 M. would make the column very high indeed. It was made up of three equal pieces, in honour of the Trinity, which would mean that each section was 4 metres long, and blocks of stone of that size are by no means unusual in the buildings of Northern Syria. The remains of the column that lie about the rock-hewn base have been chipped away by countless pious relic-hunters in the Middle Ages until they are shapeless boulders; but they appear to have been cylindrical and from 1.50 m. to 2 m. in diameter. We are wont to picture Saint Simeon standing solitary upon a column of some Classical form, with a spreading capital, and without means of access except by ropes, and indeed Stylites are so represented in the *Menologiums*¹⁷⁵; but one may gather from Bedjan's text of the *Life of St. Simeon*, that this was certainly not always the case, for there was certainly an approach, sometimes referred to as a ladder, sometimes as a staircase, leading to the top of the pillar. It is recounted, in one passage, that during an illness of the Saint, a cool and delicious current of air could be felt above half way up the ladder, in another, that the bishop of Antioch mounted a stair to administer the Eucharist to Saint Simeon. At his death his chief disciple John was with him, and his body was placed in a coffin, and kept on the top of the pillar for a day, while arrangements were being made for its translation to Antioch. It would appear, from these statements and others too numerous to mention, that the summit of the pillar was about six feet square, and hence had space enough to accommodate more than one person, and it was provided with a rail of some sort.

The monastery stands upon the crest of a high, rocky hill which protrudes forward from the mountains behind, like a promontory, into the plain. The church occupies the entire width of the crest, its western arm being built up on high arched substructures above the steep slope. The entire site of the monastery, and considerable spaces to the north and south of it, have been scarped away to a smooth level surface of rock. A stout wall limits the sacred precinct on the north,

and high retaining walls with buttresses were built along the eastern and western limits. The monastic buildings (*Ill.* 100) form a large group to the southeast of the church, and a walled enclosure extends in front of the south arm where the main entrances and beautiful narthex of the church stand. (*Ill.* 101). The principal road, the *Via Sacra*, spanned by at least one triumphal arch, led up the western slope from the town at the foot of the hill, and another road approached the monastic buildings from the valley on the opposite side. About two hundred metres to the south of monastery, near the end of the promontory, stands a second group of religious buildings including a small basilical church and a large central building which has been called a baptistery, and probably with good reason; for the biographers of Saint Simeon mention baptisms by the hundreds as taking place directly after the preaching of the Saint. This building is almost perfectly preserved, and is described in a later chapter.

*The Great Church.*¹⁷⁶

The plan of the Great Church, as has been noted above, takes the form of a cross, with an octagon of arches carried on piers at the intersection of the arms, which are formed by four basilical structures. The middle aisles of the basilicas terminate at the arches of the four cardinal sides of the octagon and the side aisles terminate in trapezoidal chapels formed by small arches within the great arches of the oblique sides of the octagon. Each of these chapels is provided with a small apse (*Ill.* 103) at the angles formed by the outer walls of the basilicas. In the centre of the great octagon stands the rock-hewn base of Saint Simeon's great pillar (*Ill.* 100). The eastern basilica is longer than the others, having nine bays to the others seven, and is the only one that is provided with apses, of which there are three, a great apse at the end of the middle aisle and small ones at the ends of the side aisles. The prothesis and diaconicon formed rectangular wings on either side. The northern basilica has three portals in its north end which opened upon a colonnaded porch; the west church, more than half of which was built upon arched substructures, as has been said above, opened upon a high terrace overlooking the town below, and the main entrance was in the end of the south church where there were four portals within a magnificent arched porch, or narthex, which makes one think of the famous porch of Saint Gilles in southern France.

It was discovered, during the recent survey of the

¹⁷⁵ *il Menologio di Basilio II* (Cod. Vat. Gr. 1613), Torino, Pls. 208, 237, 238.

¹⁷⁶ *S. C.* Pls. 139—148. *A.* II, pp. 184—190. *P.* II, B. p. 281 f.



Ill. 101. Kal'at Sim'ân. Church of St. Simeon Stylites, narthex of South basilica.



Ill. 102. Kal'at Sim'ân. Church of St. Simeon Stylites, exterior from the Southeast.

Early Churches in Syria

monastery, that the east-and-west axis of the church is not straight, as it is shown in M. de Vogüé's plan, the eastern arm bending toward the north by several degrees.¹⁷⁷ The three other basilicas are at right angles with each other, and a diagonal drawn through the north and south basilicas, from the northwest angle to the southeast angle, passes through the great column base, and lies due north and south.

The length of the church from east to west is 100 metres, from north to south 88 metres, the basilicas are 24 metres wide, and the octagon 28 metres in diameter. The actual superficial area covered by the cruciform building is 3840 square metres, in which respect the church is considerably larger than the Cathedral of Litchfield, or Wells, and only a trifle smaller than Notre Dame de Laon. Distyle porches, carrying semicircular roofs of stone, protected most of the side portals, of which there were twenty; only along the walls which form the northwest angle were there continuous colonnades. Two of the portals on the south flanks were closed as exterior doorways at some period after the completion of the church by having rectangular tomb chapels built outside of them. One of these tombs contained one sarcophagus, the other, three.

The ornament of the church is rich and profuse throughout, showing every variety of carved decoration evolved in the churches of Northern Syria during the fifth century. In addition to the carved ornament, polychromy was introduced, not only by the use of materials of different colours, but by actual painted decoration upon the mouldings. It is also known that the pavements were composed of coloured mosaics, and it is probable that the walls were covered with paintings. The eight arches of the octagon (*Ill.* 103) were adorned with the richest of carved mouldings on both sides; the arches themselves spring from columns with shafts of pink marble and capitals of Corinthian design richly wrought, those supporting the arches of the oblique sides of the octagon being of the wind-blown variety. The caps of the piers to which the columns respond are also Corinthian in type, but the leaves are not so highly articulated. The great arch mouldings are returned and carried from arch to arch at the level of the springing, like early arcuated entablatures, and the outermost member of the mouldings is a rich cornice set above a plain frieze, and carried on small consoles which form conch-like lacunae (*Ill.* 230 A). This cornice is also carried from arch to arch. Just above the caps of the angle piers are cubical projecting brackets which carried colonnettes in the

angles of the octagon, and these, in turn, supported other brackets which carried an upper set of colonnettes that extended up to the heavy, straight cornice of the octagon. The arches of the apsidal exedras were moulded as richly as the great arches, on a smaller scale, but the connecting arches have only the cornice member above plain voussoirs. These connecting arches spring from moulded brackets set in the exterior angles of the walls and the piers. The great arch of the principal apse is even more richly decorated than the arches of the octagon. Here we find a broad series of mouldings decorated with intricate carved designs, the plain frieze of the octagon arches is replaced by a frieze of erect acanthus leaves, and even the cornice is given richer ornament. Just below the springing of the half dome is a deep ovolo moulding carved with a rinceau of acanthus and bands of leaf ornament. This is returned below the springing of the arch mouldings, but on a level one course higher than the pier caps. The face of this space above the pier caps is carved with perpendicular flutings, the pier caps are richly adorned with Corinthian foliage, and the faces of the angle piers below the caps are treated as fluted pilasters. The five windows of the apse have incised mouldings which are carried along at the level of the springing of the arches. The subsidiary apses are treated with only a little less richness of detail. The rest of the interior ornament was that of the arcades of the naves and the clearstorey walls. These are all lying in ruins, but it is not difficult to reconstruct the scheme of decoration. The columns were all elevated upon low, moulded pedestals, the capitals appear to have reproduced the forms already seen in the columns of the great octagon. The arches were provided with mouldings which were returned and doubled back upon very narrow stilt blocks. Above the arches was a string course at the clearstorey level. Just above this level brackets were set between the windows, carrying colonnettes which gave support to double corbels beneath the great timbers of the roof.

The exterior of the church was no less richly ornamented than the interior. The southern narthex and the exterior treatment of the east end are the most interesting features; for all the side walls and the north façade, were decorated according to designs with which we are more or less familiar in other churches of the fifth century. The narthex (*Ill.* 101) consists of a broad middle arch between two narrow ones, the three being joined to the main façade by four arches which span the narthex. This arrangement demanded four compound piers. These consist of three

¹⁷⁷ S. C. Pl. 63. A. II, p. 237.



Ill. 103. *Kal'at Sim'an. Church of St. Simeon Stylites, showing North side of octagon and rock-hewn base of St. Simeon's pillar.*



Ill. 104. *Kal'at Sim'an. Church of St. Simeon Stylites, exterior from the East.*

is finished above by a delicately wrought cornice with small consoles (*Ill.* 231 A). The windows of the apse have arch mouldings which are continuous from one arch to the next, extending behind the columns. The little side apses have only the podium mouldings and the delicate cornice. All the rest of the exterior decoration is only an accentuation of the finest motives of ornament known in Northern Syria: base mouldings, string mouldings and window mouldings which extend unbroken over the openings and between them, returning and doubling, in curves and double angles. Often it happens that one of these window mouldings is carried along a wall directly above a string moulding, thus doubling the amount of carved ornament. The doorways have deep frame mouldings and ornamental door-caps with high or low relieving arches above the openings. Some of the door-caps are carved with foliate ornament, others are only mouldings cut off at both ends. It is significant, perhaps, that the only examples of mouldings terminating in scrolls are to be seen in the walls which form the southeast angle between the east and south basilicas. The only really new features of ornament introduced in this great building are to be found in angle caps of Corinthian form that appear one course below the cornice of the walls at the principal exterior angles, and the grooving of the pilasters. Semicircular hooded distyle porches stood at several of the side portals.

*Dêr Sim'ân. West Monastery.*¹⁷⁸

In the town below Ẕal'at Sim'ân, to the northwest, there were no less than three large monasteries, one of which, no doubt, was that to which Saint Simeon came when he left the convent of Mar Eusebona. But the extensions and erections of later years make it impossible to recognize any particular building as older than the rest. The most extensive of the three is the West Monastery, the buildings of which consist of a large church, two extensive inns for pilgrims, a group of smaller buildings and a great built cemetery — a sort of *campo santo*. These structures are grouped about an enclosure of irregular shape (*Ill.* 105), with the church on the south side at its western end. To the north of the church is a large, almost square enclosure with a great inn closing its western side, a cloister walk along its northern side, and an inn or residential building partly closing its east side. At this point the main enclosure extends eastward in a much narrower projection, with the residential building just mentioned on its north side and three open loggias

or stoas occupying three sides of its east end. The remainder of the south side of the court is occupied by the façade of the "campo santo", which joins onto the east end of the church and is on lower ground. The front of this extraordinary structure is designed like a narthex (*Ill.* 106) with three arches carried on two columns, and having a chamber at its west end. The inner wall of this porch or narthex, has an arched portal between two large windows. The whole of the interior was excavated downward in the solid rock, providing perpendicular walls on three sides in which arcosolia with moulded arches were cut, six on the south side, five on the east, and five on the west directly beneath the east end of the church. Within this rock-hewn rectangle was built a covered walk like a cloister, consisting of a row of piers on each side, in front of the arcosolia. These piers were reproduced in an upper storey which was surrounded with walls. The entire middle space appears to have been open to the sky. There is very little to be said about the great inns and the residential buildings; all are two storeys high and consist of plain, high walls with porches of monolithic piers. The large inn and the smaller structure of the same type have no interior dividing walls, and are entirely surrounded with porticoes of monolithic, rectangular piers in two storeys. The church is interesting and well preserved. Its half dome and the interior arches of the nave have fallen, and the upper part of the west façade is gone, but the rest of the structure presents important details. The plan of the church is typical of fifth century plans. The interior ornament is refined and well used. Mouldings are applied, not only to the apse arch and the arch of the prothesis, but also to the faces of the nave arcades. The capitals are all of flowing Corinthian design; but the caps of all piers and responds are treated with deep mouldings. On the outside, the string courses and the door-frames are relief mouldings, while all the window mouldings, which are carried along above the string courses, are incised (*Ill.* 107). The west façade had a single middle portal of imposing proportions, and four large windows on the ground storey (*Ill.* 126). Above the main portal was an opening composed of three tall arches of equal span supported by two colonnettes, the bases of which are still in place.

*Dêr Sim'ân. South Monastery.*¹⁷⁹

The buildings of the South Monastery consist of a chapel, a residential building, and three large structures of the pandocheion type, grouped about a small L

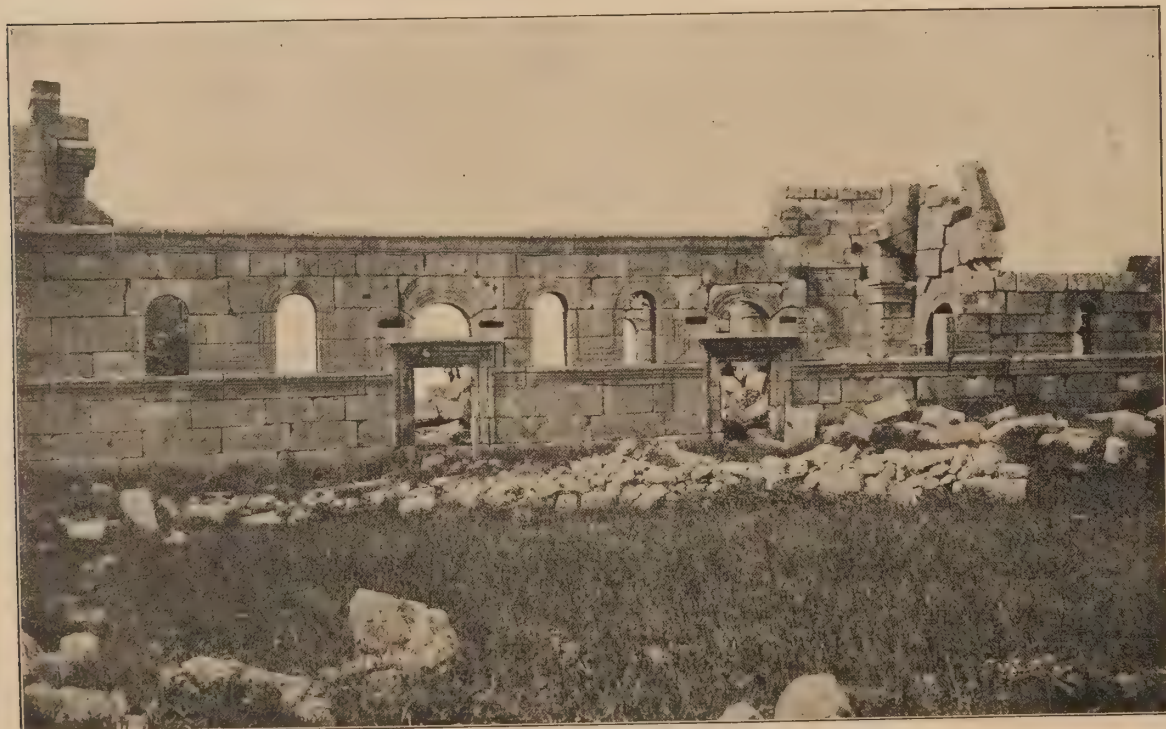
¹⁷⁸ P. II, B. p. 270 f., *Ills.* 286—293.

Early Churches in Syria.

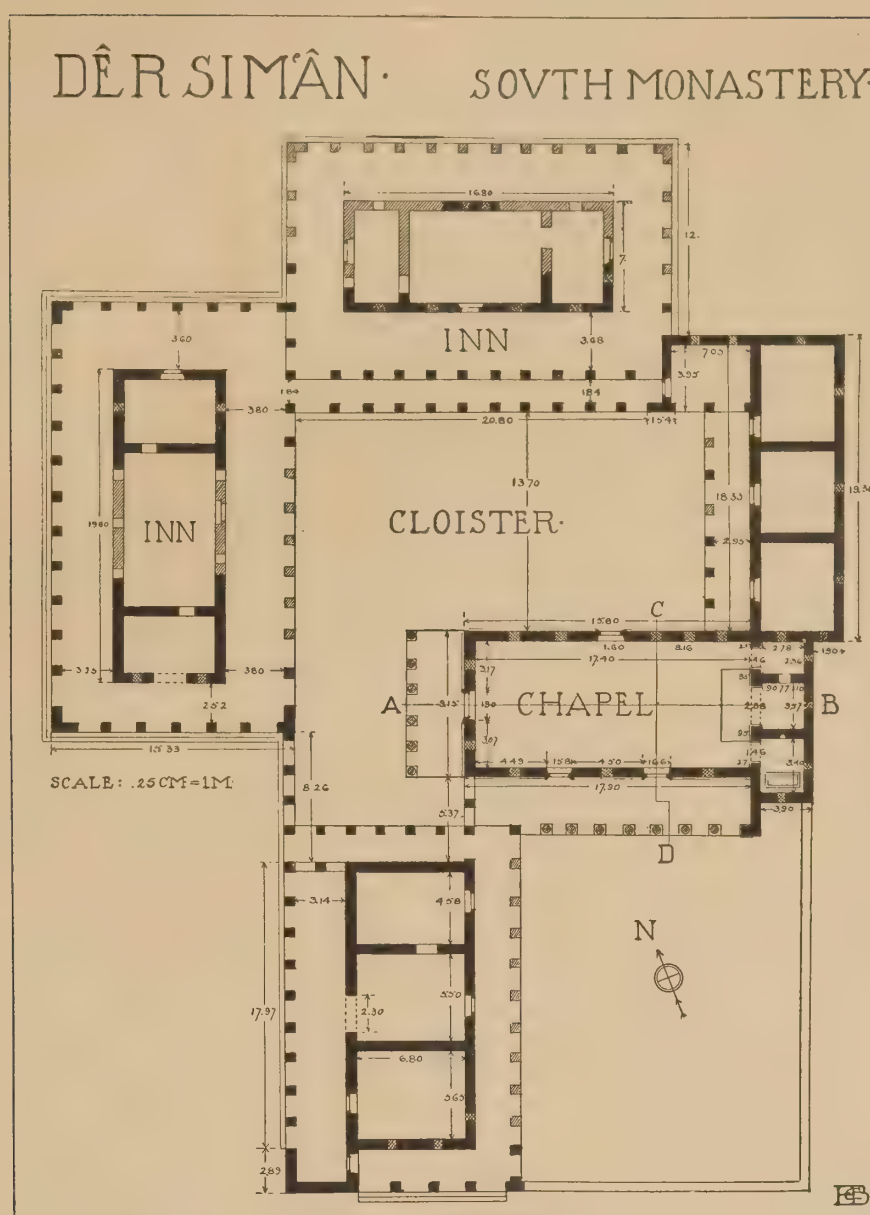
¹⁷⁹ P. II, B. *Ills.* 282—285.



Ill. 106. Dêr Sim'ân. West Monastery, extrance to Campo Santo.



Ill. 107. Dêr Sim'ân. West Monastery, exterior of Church from the South.



III. 108.

shaped cloister (III. 108). The inn on the north and that on the west have their long sides toward the court. Each of these buildings is divided within into a long middle room and two smaller apartments at the ends. Both are surrounded with extremely high porticoes of monolithic piers in two storeys. The inn at the south stands with its narrow end toward the street. It is evenly divided into three rooms, is two storeys high, and is surrounded with porticoes in two storeys. The chapel, standing in the interior angle of the L, is a large building of its kind, its undivided nave being over 17 m. long and 8 m. wide. At the east end are three arches, the middle arch opening into a square sanctuary, and the smaller, side arches giving upon side chambers, one of which protrudes beyond the wall of the nave on the south. All this

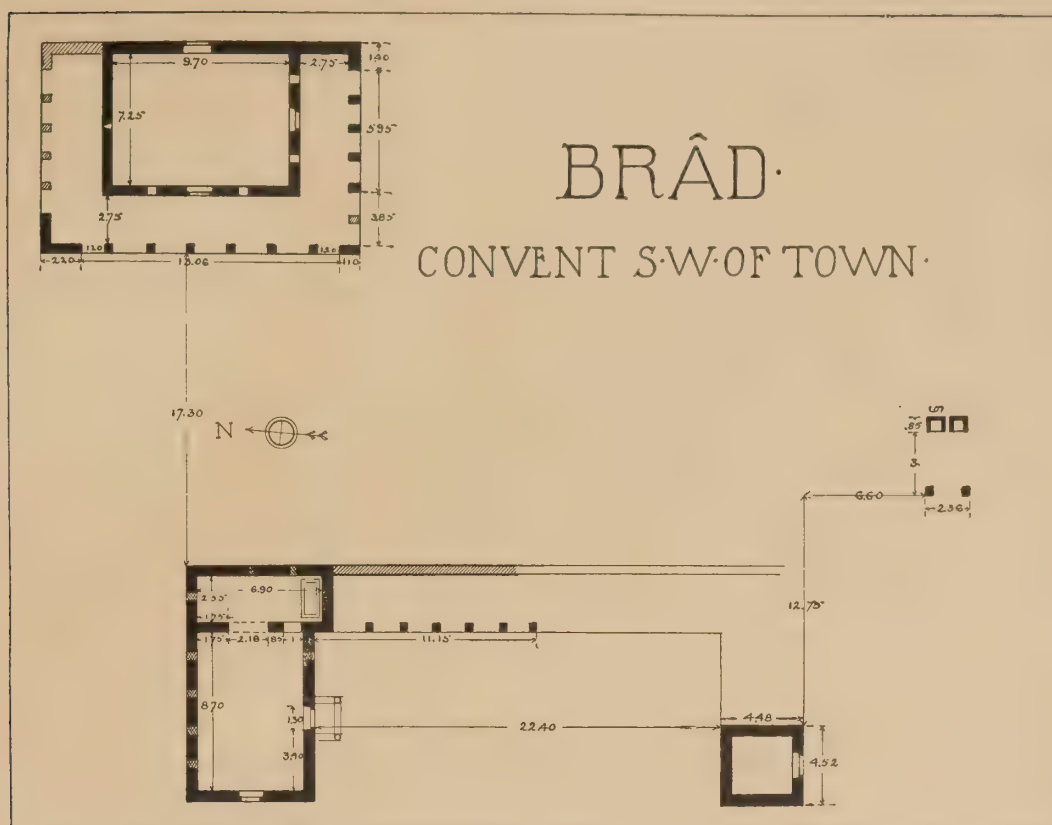
part of the chapel was covered by a lean-to roof running at right angles to the roof of the nave. There are continuous porches of columns along the west and south walls, the portals are richly decorated and there are three large arched windows in the west front separated by slender piers (III. 109). The long row of windows high up in the side walls, eight on either side, are adorned with relief mouldings which are returned at right angles and carried from opening to opening. The chapel is almost perfectly preserved, but for its wooden roof; even parts of its mosaic pavement, in coloured geometrical designs, are still to be seen. The building probably belongs to the sixth century. To the north of the east end of the chapel lies a smaller building, like a large private house, which was probably the residence of the monks;



Ill. 109. Dêr Sim'ân. South Monastery, view from the West.



Ill. 110. Dêr Sim'ân. Great Pandocheion, view from Southeast.



III. 111.

but it is not at all certain that the building at the south end of the cloister court was also a residential building, since its interior arrangement is not like that commonly found in great inns.

*Dêr Sim'ân. Pandocheion.*¹⁸⁰

The group of large buildings situated on the east side of the town of Dêr Sim'ân, at the foot of the hill upon which the shrine of Saint Simeon stands, appears, at first sight, like a pair of huge inns of the usual type placed end to end. But an examination of the southernmost of the two buildings reveals what may be taken for a chapel within its rectangular area, and this suggests either that it was a pandocheion with a chapel for the use of monks, or a monastery devoted chiefly to the entertainment of pilgrims. East of this building, higher up the slope, is a broad rock-hewn platform on a level with the upper storey of the inn, and connected with it by an approach or viaduct, composed of stone slabs (*Ill.* 110) carried by ten monolithic piers of stone. At the northeast angle of the platform is a fine tomb chamber, partly built and partly excavated in the rock, and to the south of this are other rock-hewn ornamented arcossolia. All of these features point to the probability that the

whole group belonged to a monastery. The great north building is the largest of its kind in Syria; its porticoes consisted of 18 piers on each side and 8 at the ends, in two storeys, making nearly a hundred in all. These porticoes, like the building itself, were extraordinarily high.

The other building is of more common dimensions. Its south end is walled off from the rest so as to form an oblong chamber. The east wall of this chamber is replaced by a broad arch which gives upon another chamber, like a sanctuary, which occupies the width of the portico. But this chamber was not a sanctuary, for a real sanctuary of nearly square plan was built out to the east, protruding beyond the outer line of the portico. Thus a chapel of fair size was constructed within the pandocheion, unless we are to assume that the remainder of the building, with its great interior space and its capacious two-storey porticoes on all sides, was really the home of the monks.

Brâd. Barade.

Southwest of Brâd, crowning a high platform, stands a small monastery¹⁸¹ in a remarkable state of preservation (*Ill.* 111). The group, which is a scattered one, consists of a small chapel, a building of the pando-

¹⁸⁰ P. II, B. p. 275 f.

¹⁸¹ P. II, B. p. 313.

cheion type and of medium size, and a tower. The tower, which is perfectly preserved, stands about 22 m. due south of the west end of the chapel. From the east end of the chapel, a stoa, i.e. a wall with a row of piers in front of it, extends to the south, and probably turned westward to join the tower. Above the cloistered walk was a solid upper storey, which probably contained the living quarters of the monks. Eastward from the chapel and about 17 m. distant stands a building two storeys high, with two-storey porticoes on the north, west and south. The chapel has an undivided nave and a sanctuary with a lean-to roof. This lower part of the building protrudes a little toward the south, and, in the extension, stands an open sarcophagus, which suggests that the

chapel was in the nature of a *μνημεῖον* or memorial.

Dauzwâr.

This charming little ruined town contains a small monastery¹⁸² which is quite the opposite of the one just described, being very compact and entirely enclosed by high walls. A long, undivided chapel occupies the northeast angle of a nearly square group of buildings, and the southeast angle is filled with a small, square structure, like a baptistery. In the wall between the two is the principal entrance to the monastery. The other sides of the group are occupied by shallow buildings and a fine cloister walk with roof of stone carried on handsome columns extends along the north and west sides.

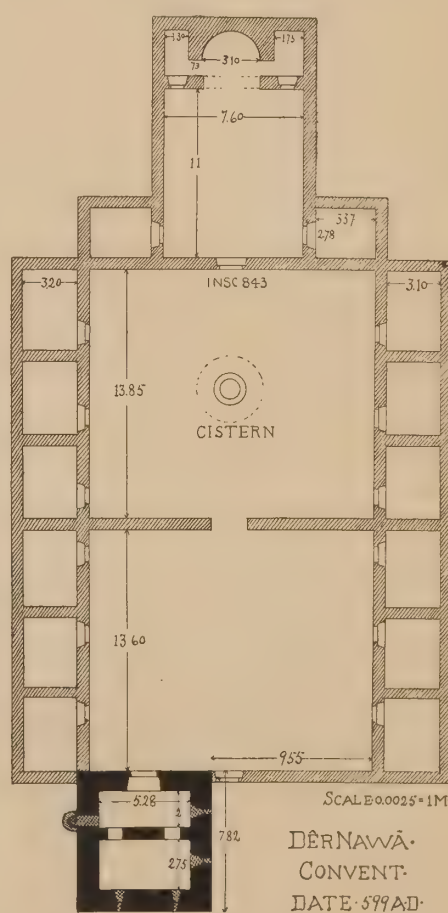
4. MONASTERIES OF NORTHEASTERN SYRIA.

MONASTICISM in the *Chalcedine* has been already referred to in these pages in connexion with the ancient basilica of Zebed, which was apparently the church of a monastery to which Rabulā retired as a monk for a number of years before he became bishop of Edessa (p 39). The plan of the church could be traced in the lower courses of its walls, which were of stone, among the mounds of earth which represent the disintegrated mud-brick of which the upper parts of the walls were constructed. The other mounds, which surround the church in like manner, represent the disintegrated walls of a large monastic institution; but the plan of these buildings was far more complex than that of the basilica, and nothing short of complete excavation would serve to give one an idea of the form of this fourth century monastery, and the excavations would lay bare only the ground plan. Mud-brick was so commonly the material for the superstructures of all kinds of domestic buildings in this part of Syria that the case of this old monastery in Zebed is the common lot of practically all the similar institutions in the region. The huge monolithic jambs and other details in stone usually mark the sites of the churches; but it is well nigh impossible to determine whether the mounds which are found near them are the ruins of monastic buildings or of private houses. It may be that some of the churches of this region described in the earlier chapters of this book, were the churches or chapels of monasteries.

Dêr Nawā. ¹⁸³ 598 A.D.

There is, however, at least one group of buildings

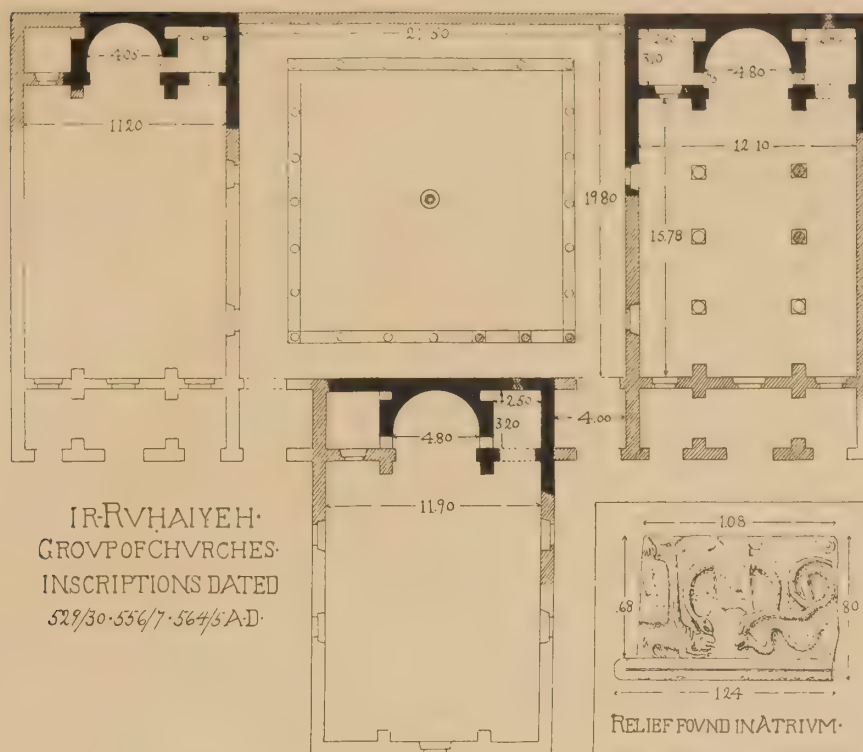
which, by its name, as well as from the outlines of its plan, may be safely described as a monastery. The ruin, called Dêr Nawā, lies to the northwest of the large ruined town of Nawā. The group embraced a



III. 112.

182 *A.* II, p. 232.

183 *P.* II, B. p. 15.



Ill. 113.

tower which was built of stone, and which serves as a landmark for miles around in this comparatively flat country where most of the architecture was in sun-baked brick. The lower courses of the walls of the other buildings were also of stone, the upper parts being of mud-brick, but the plan was easily traced in the stone foundations (Ill. 112). Great interest attaches to the plan of this little convent, for it is the most symmetrical and well balanced plan in all the north country, and hardly less symmetrical than the great convent known as id-Dêr in the Ḥaurân, which it strongly resembles. The date 598 A.D., found upon the lintel makes it one of the latest foundations in the region. The little chapel occupies the easternmost position in the group. Its east end consists of an apse between narrow side chambers both of which open upon the apse and upon the aisles. Its nave was probably divided into two or more bays by piers, but there is no remnant of such details. At the western end two chapels were added, one on either side, as at id-Dêr. In front of the façade thus elongated is a nearly square atrium flanked by chambers, three on either side. In the middle of the west wall of the atrium was an arch which opened into a second or outer atrium of the same dimensions and disposition as the first. The only entrance to the convent was a small doorway in the middle of the west wall of the outer atrium. Adjoining this entrance on the north

is the tower mentioned above. The plan of an outer and inner court recalls the plan of the dependencies of the ancient Nabataean temple of Ba'al Shamîn at Sî in the Ḥaurân. The tower was divided by partition walls into two apartments on each floor. The upper floor was provided with a latrina overhanging the north wall. It seems not improbable that this tower was the retreat of an anchorite, one of the followers of Saint Simeon Stylites, some of whom are said to have lived in towers instead of upon pillars.

ir-Ruḥaiyeh. ¹⁸⁴ 373, 529, 556 and 564 A.D.

At the northeastern foot of the plateau called il-ʿAlā, is a large group of ruined buildings, consisting chiefly of mounds of decayed mud-brick, which was probably not a village but a monastery. Parts of these buildings were built of basalt, and these are the apses and side chambers of three basilical churches of nearly equal dimensions, placed in unusual positions with regard to one another. They stood upon three sides of a square atrium (Ill. 113), one on the north, one on the south and one on the west. The sides of the square were fixed by the length of the north and south churches excluding their narthexes, the east wall of the west church, and arched passages on either side of it, closed the west side of the atrium, and a wall closed the opposite side. The atrium was provided with colonnades on all sides. The destruction of the buildings has been

¹⁸⁴ P. II, B. p. 23.

Early Churches in Syria

very complete. The apse walls of all these churches are standing, both side chambers of the south church, and the south chambers of the other two churches are preserved. Indeed, the south chamber of the south church and that of the west church have been roofed with mud domes in comparatively recent times, one would imagine, but now long deserted. All the remaining walls of the churches were of mud-brick above the lower courses, and most of the stone foundations are deeply buried. A complete plan could be made of the south church, and the other plans were partly restored after this one. Its nave was divided into four bays by three columns on either side. Its narthex consisted of three outer arches and two transverse arches carried on T form piers. The plans of the east ends of all three churches are almost identical, though the measurements vary slightly. In all three the entrance to the prothesis is an arch, that of the diaconicon, a doorway. In the south and west churches the apse is directly connected with both side chambers, but in the north church only the prothesis has this feature. The plan shows by the shading just how much of the churches is standing, how much is visible in foundations, and how much has been restored. Four dated inscriptions were found scattered among the ruins. If the ruins about the churches are the remains of monastic buildings, as I believe they are, then all the inscriptions belonged to the monastery. In any event, some of the dated inscriptions belonged to the churches. The earliest of these

was found built into a modern, or late Mediaeval, house in the apse of the north church. It says that Eunomos, or Eudemos, a javelin-man "built this," in the year 372. An inscription upon a lintel gives the date 529—30. Another says *under our most God fearing mistress*, and is dated in the year 556—7; this undoubtedly refers to the empress Theodora. A fourth gives the simple date, September 564. It is not impossible that the earliest inscription, dated 372, actually gives the date of the north church; for this church, of all the three, is the one most likely to be earlier than the others, for its apse is narrower and the proportions of the nave are more slender. It is only in much later churches that the apse is connected with both side chambers. It is quite likely that a monastery, existing here in the fourth century, grew famous, and was given a second church under the patronage of the empress Theodora in 556, and that a third church was added at the same time, or later, in 564. The appearance of the *Kubbeh*, or bee-hive-shaped dome of mud-brick over the square side chambers of two of these churches is significant, even though the domes may be of comparatively recent construction. I do not know how long a mud-brick dome would last in a practically rainless country, but one pauses to wonder if these domes, on their crude pendentives, may not be the last of a succession of such structures that have occupied these places since the sixth century.

CHAPTER V

THE CHURCHES OF THE SIXTH CENTURY: 1. INTRODUCTION: 2. SOUTHERN SYRIA:
3. NORTHERN SYRIA: 4. NORTHEASTERN SYRIA:

1. INTRODUCTION

THE ecclesiastical architecture of Syria as a whole, during the sixth century, which must include for us also the first decade of the seventh, developed mainly along constructional rather than along ornamental lines. Two opposite tendencies are visible from the first, one in the direction of simplification, the other toward elaboration. The first was a purely practical tendency, as the result of an effort to provide small communities with simple churches which would involve the fewest possible problems of construction, and upon which might be expended a greater or smaller amount of carved enrichment according to the wealth or artistic resources of each community. The result of this was the appearance, about the year 500, of a basilical church with a rectangular sanctuary, between square side chambers, which could be roofed either by a simple lean-to of wood or by the extension of the main roof of the nave, by which expedient the expense and difficulty of erecting a half dome would be avoided. There can be little doubt that the placing of the altar in a rectangular space was the first practiced in the simple rectangular chapels of the fifth century, and that after the people and the clergy had become accustomed to the idea of a rectangular sanctuary in these small buildings they did not feel the necessity of an apse in larger churches. This form of eastern termination was not entirely new in the churches of the South, where there were also precedents in the Pagan temples; but it seems that the experiment was not attempted in Northern Syria until the sixth century. In Northeastern Syria the rectangular sanctuary was almost unknown. In the matter of exterior and interior decoration, these churches of simple plan differed widely among themselves throughout the entire century. Within the first decade there is at least one church that is almost as devoid of ornament as the plainest buildings of the fourth century, and another that combines all the richest forms of carved ornament that the country knew. In the closing years of the century there were erected churches of the same simple plan, and of about the same size, but representing the two extremes in matters of ornament.

Early Churches in Syria.

The other tendency, that toward elaboration, is manifested, as has been said above, in the logical development of principles of construction. In the South, this development took the form of dome construction, which involved the introduction of a central plan. In the North it expressed itself in an evolution toward a roof of stone of another kind, that is to say, toward the carrying of stone construction more and more into the roof structure. The first step toward this end was achieved by converting the oblong piers, like those of the church of ʔalb Lauzeh, into T form piers, and by extending the inside members of the piers up into the clearstorey to support high, loaded *transverse* arches across the main aisle, which were built up into gables and gave support to the timbers of the roof as in Ruwêḥā. This may have been prompted by a growing scarcity of timbers of large size; for the new scheme certainly decreased the number of large timbers required. The second step was taken when it was discovered that these high transverse arches needed abutment. The T form piers were then improved by the invention of cruciform piers, pilaster piers were placed against the side walls, and narrow transverse arches were thrown across the aisles also, as in iṭ-Ṭūba. These lower arches did not meet the actual thrust of the high arches, but they greatly solidified the structure. Apparently they were not necessary under ordinary conditions, but they had a steadying effect in times of earthquake. It will be noticed in the descriptions of the churches which illustrate the evolution of these constructive principles, that, in plan, the middle aisle was divided into squares by these two kinds of piers and transverse arches. But these experiments along the lines of development in construction were exceptional, and there were many churches erected during the sixth century in Northern Syria which departed in no essential features from the plans of the larger churches of the preceding century. In Northeastern Syria there was apparently no tendency toward the simplification of plan, though columns were occasionally introduced, in place of piers, as the supports of the nave arcades. The tendency to elaborate the construction

Early Churches in Syria

of the superstructure, however, was carried out in both principles described above, that of the dome construction from the Persian and Byzantine influences, and that of high transverse arch construction of the North. The common use of sun-dried brick in this part of Syria, and the undoubted use of the *Kubbeh*, or high, pointed dome, in the simpler forms of domestic architecture, rendered inevitable the development of dome structure in churches. The introduction of baked brick — perhaps an importation into one section of the country- — brought about a development of dome and vault construction that seldom has been surpassed. This sudden appearance of domes and vaults of brick came rather late in the century, too late, it would seem, to have had any far reaching consequences; but one can not resist the temptation to speculate upon the probable result, if these various types of structure had been permitted to exist side by side for a while longer. There is the possibility that the cross vault of *Qaşr Ibn Wardân* would very soon have found its place above the squares formed by the high transverse arches of *Ruwêḥā*, that the dividing columns and sub-arches of *Reṣâfah* would have been brought in to divide the aisles also into squares to receive cross vaults, and that the Romanesque building principles of Lombardy and Normandy would have been achieved in Syria four hundred years ahead of time.

In ornament, the school of Southern and Northeastern Syria made little progress during the sixth century, excepting on the banks of the Euphrates, perhaps because they had already advanced as far as was possible under the limitations of the materials with which they had to deal. But in Northern Syria all the schemes of ornament devised during the fifth century were combined and carried to further possibilities of expression. It is interesting to observe that, while in the fifth century the Oriental elements of ornament were rather more accentuated, in the sixth century more stress was laid upon features of Hellenistic origin. For instance, the employment of pilasters at the exterior angles of buildings, or at least, the use of angle caps and the perpendicular grooving of the angles below them to simulate pilasters, is enforced as a principle of Classical decoration by the addition of true or false pilasters at intervals along the walls, acting as apparent supports to the heavy string courses. These are often applied in two orders, especially if the interior structure is in two storeys. The Corinthian order predominates in this century, and often in a form that is much nearer the Hellenistic original than that of the capitals of the fifth and fourth centuries. The portals of several churches are almost reproductions of late Hellenistic doorways, having frame mouldings that are like archi-

traves in profile, and door-caps which consist of an ornamented frieze and a cornice with modillions, either terminating in, or carried upon, large consoles. It appears that an actual revival of Classical motives is to be found in many of the churches of this century, a *renaissance* in which only the Hellenistic, as opposed to the Roman, elements emerge. It is true that most of this ornament was employed in the fifth century, particularly in the great church of Saint Simeon Stylites; but some of the churches of the sixth century, and more especially some of the monumental tombs of the century, make use of these types of decoration in a more Classical manner, as if their architects, having seen their predecessors express themselves in a national and Oriental manner, had begun for themselves to study the Classical art of Hellenistic Syria. This tendency to revive Classical forms of ornament in the sixth century is less noticeable in Southern Syria, where the architecture of the period is inferior, on the whole, to that of the North; but in an exceptionally fine building, — the Cathedral of *Boṣrā*, — we find the richly decorated cornice of a Pagan temple charmingly employed as the crowning feature of the principal wall, and cleverly reproduced for the archivolt of the main apse. The theory that certain architects of this century in Syria were studying and reproducing the Classical forms of architectural ornament, becomes the more interesting and perhaps the more convincing, when it is observed that certain other architects were busily employed in emphasizing the more original and Oriental features of decoration that had appeared in the older Christian architecture of Syria. In some of the smaller churches, such features as the draping of mouldings in curves, like festoons, between windows and the spiral loop at the ends of mouldings are repeated again and again, until they appear to be the chief notes in the decorative scheme. In a small number of churches the capitals and other carved details manifest a decided leaning toward the colouristic treatment, but these capitals, unlike those in the Byzantine churches of Constantinople, Salonika and Ravenna, are concave rather than convex in form.

There were then several influences at work within the architecture of Syria during the last century of its development, so that the architecture was still in the process of evolution, and very much alive, when the end, due to external causes, came. The influence in matters constructional appears, on the whole, to have directed the course of development toward the goal finally reached by the mediaeval architects of Italy and France; one of the influences in matters of ornamental detail was distinctly working toward a renaissance of Classical forms, the other toward the

perfection of native Syrian motives. These questions are discussed at greater length in the second part of this volume. There are thirty ecclesiastical buildings

with definitely dated inscriptions of this century, of which twenty-four are churches, and six are chapels or baptisteries.

2. CHURCHES OF SOUTHERN SYRIA

Churches dated in the years 512, 515 and 557 A.D.

THE sixth century churches of Southern Syria may be divided into three classes according to their plans; class 1, the basilical type with longitudinal supports composed of piers or columns and arches; class 2, in which may be grouped a number of churches of irregular plan and with different kinds of roof structure, including, in fact, all the churches which are not of the ordinary basilical form; and class 3, the domed churches of central plan.

CLASS I

Basilical Churches

The churches of this class are represented by a single dated monument, of the year 557. Their naves are uniformly provided with a longitudinal system of supports for the roof; but the superstructures are by no means similar, and their east ends present at least three different dispositions, one with an apse and side chambers, another with three apses, and a third with a rectangular sanctuary between side chambers. The earliest clearstoreys in Southern Syria are introduced in these churches.

*Umm idj-Djimâl. West Church.*¹⁸⁵

Just within the principal west gate of the city stands a ruined church which is far better preserved than most of the churches of this locality. Its nave is divided into four bays by three piers on either side carrying broad arches. At the east end is a semicircular apse between side chambers, and at the west end an arched narthex between towers (*Ill.* 114-A). The building is constructed throughout of well finished quadrated masonry with highly finished piers and arches, but the towers, which seem to have been added, are in roughly finished masonry (*Ill.* 144-B). The piers are square and low, and have moulded caps and the arches spring from very slender imposts much smaller than the tops of the piers. The arches carry a high clearstorey wall, with a rectangular window over each, and a double pitched roof of timbers covered the main aisle (*Ill.* 144-C). The side walls were as high as the crowns of the nave arches, and, with them, supported flat roofs of stone slabs over the aisles.

*Umm idj-Djimâl. "Cathedral."*¹⁸⁶ 557 A.D.

The "Cathedral" of Umm idj-Djimâl has practically the same plan and arrangement as the West Church in the same city. The western towers are omitted and a porch of five arches carried on piers, and having three doors into the church, takes its place. A small chamber was added to the north side of the church at its east end. The building has fallen into complete ruin; only the plan is readily determinable, but the piers and arches correspond exactly to those of the West Church, and the way in which the fallen building material is disposed would indicate that here also the middle aisle was roofed with wood and the side aisles with stone, and that there was a high clearstorey wall. The caps of all the piers and responds are of simple right-lined profile. One of these from an apse pier contains the simple date which, if translated, reads 557 A.D.

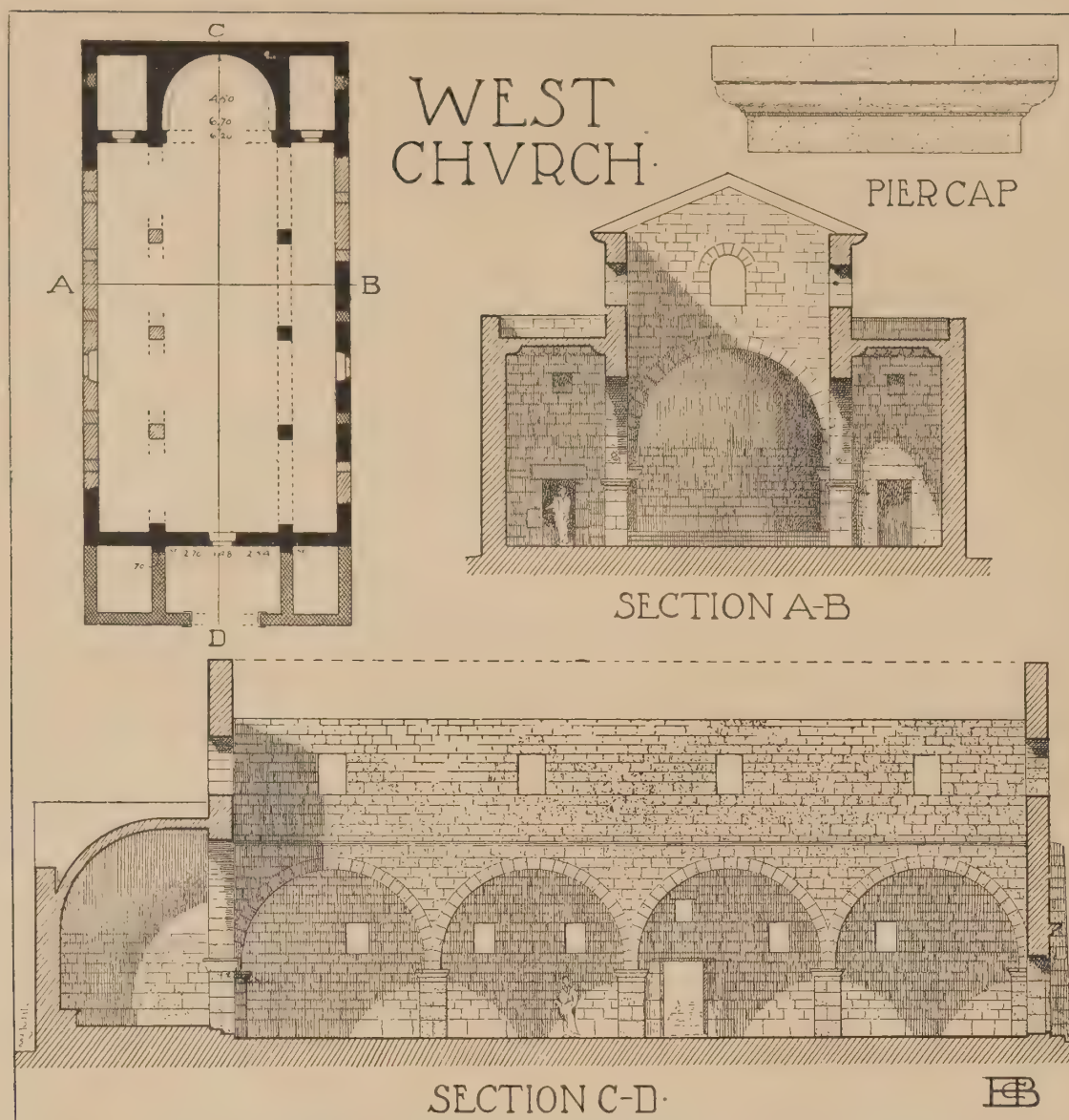
*Umm idj-Djimâl. Church of Numerianos.*¹⁸⁷

A third church in this same place which unquestionably belongs to the same period as the two described above is the church of a monastery which has been described in the last chapter, the church bearing the name of one Numerianos. It is much smaller than either of the others, but its plan is practically the same (*Ill.* 115) except that the nave has three instead of four bays. The northern half of the church and part of the west front are well preserved. Here we find a free standing porch of six Doric columns carrying architraves. The arrangement of the apse and of the piers and arches of the nave is the same as in the other two churches. The aisle is roofed with stone slabs, and the clearstorey is repeated, but with windows over the piers as well as over the arches. The only real difference here is seen in the upper storey above the north aisle which converts the clearstorey windows into gallery openings — a strange arrangement, which was probably repeated on the south side, and which I believe was not a part of the church as originally designed. The western front is perhaps the most interesting in Southern Syria; here a round arch supported upon colonnettes and flanked by rectangular openings,

¹⁸⁵ *P.* II, A. p. 187 f.

¹⁸⁶ *P.* II, A. p. 183. *Ills.* 158, 159.

¹⁸⁷ *P.* II, A. pp. 191—194.



Ill. 114-A. *Umm idj-Djimâl. West Church, plan and sections.*

with the wall above carried up into a gable, fills the whole upper storey of the west end with windows in an arrangement suggestive of Renaissance designs. These details have fallen; but no other reconstruction of the fallen parts is possible.

*id-Dêr.*¹⁸⁸

The large church of the great convent of id-Dêr has also been described in the foregoing chapter (Ill. 91). Its plan is not unlike those of the group above, except that it has narrow arches, six in number on either side, carried on five square piers. It seems probable, however, that its clearstorey was differently designed, having numerous round arched windows in place of a few rectangular openings, and it is quite certain that its side aisles, as well as its middle aisle,

were roofed in wood. The rectangular chapels which flank its west façade are very rare.

*Boşrâ. Church No. 3*¹⁸⁹.

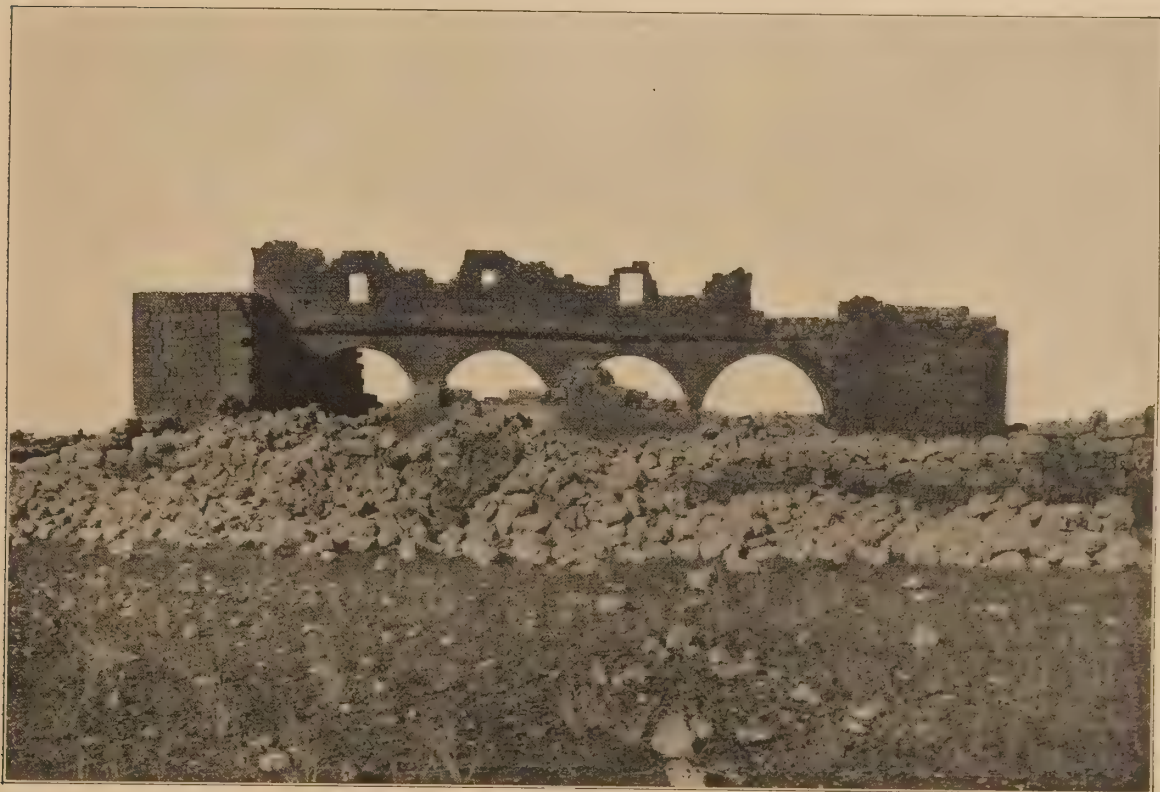
In the heart of the modern village of Boşrâ, among the walls of private houses and other buildings, may be traced the bare outline of a large basilical church (Ill. 116). The nave alone was over 25 m. long. The apse was very wide, and showed a part of its curve beyond the east walls of the two narrow side chambers; in this curve were five parallel windows. The openings between the side chambers and the aisles were arched. Only one pier of the nave is in place; this shows that there were three broad arches on either side of the nave; but, since three arches of equal width with the arch whose width is known would not carry the

¹⁸⁸ P. II, A. p. 102 f.

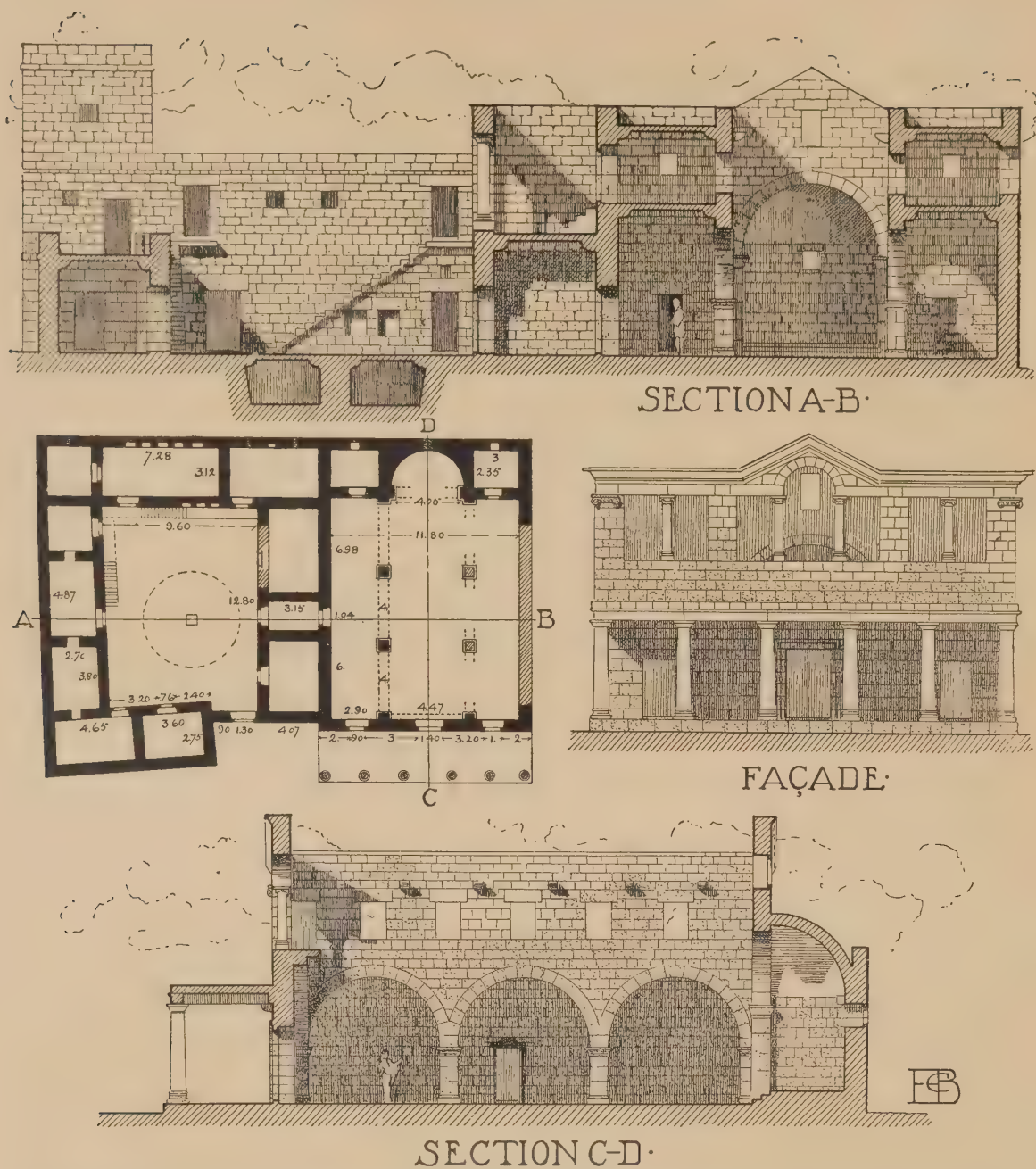
¹⁸⁹ P. II, A. p. 280.



Ill. 114-B. Umm idj-Djimâl. West Church, façade from the West.



Ill. 114-C. Umm idj-Djimâl. West Church, view from the South.



CHVRCH OF NUMERIANOS AT VMM IDJ-DJIMÂL.

Ill. 115.

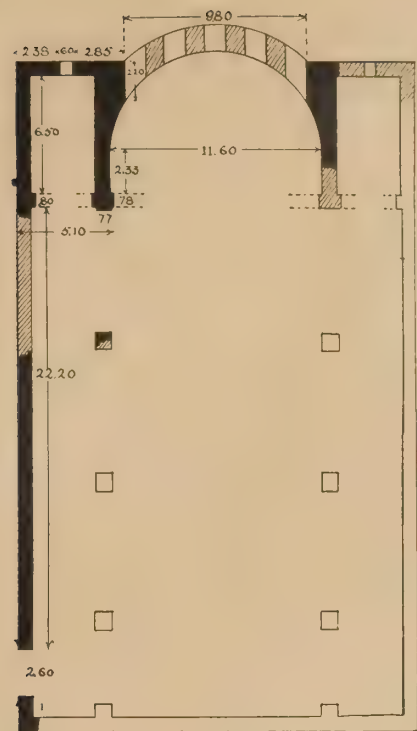
arcade to the point where the west wall is known to have been, one must assume either a narrow arch at the west ends of both arcades, as in many churches of Northeastern Syria, or an interior narthex at this point. The presence of modern buildings makes it impossible to clear up the matter.

*Boşrā. Church No. 1.*¹⁹⁰

Another much ruined church in Boşrā presents a novelty of interior arrangement. Here we have what

seems like a basilica of the ordinary type divided into six bays by columns, like those of Northern Syria (Ill. 117); but at the second bay from the east end the columns were replaced by two cruciform piers, and two pilaster piers in the walls carried three transverse arches across the aisles. The columns to the west of this are all represented by bases or standing columns; the two east of the transverse arches have been restored in the plan. The church is in such a delapidated state that it is impossible to discover

¹⁹⁰ P. II, A. p. 279.



BOŠRĀ·CHVRCH N^o 3.

Ill. 116.

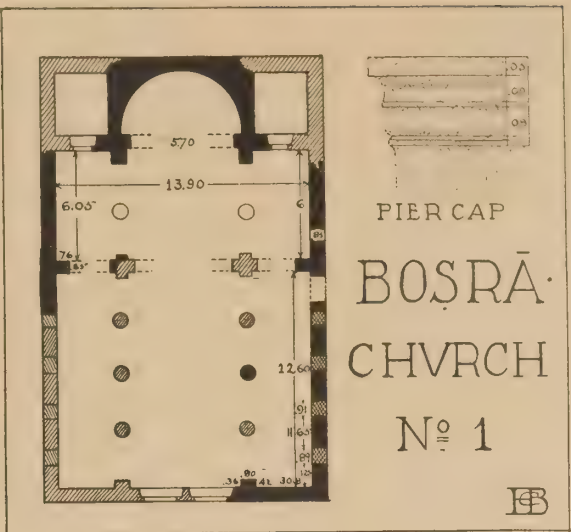
whether there actually were columns at these points, or whether broad, high arches connected the cruciform piers with the responds beside the apse.

*Umm il-Kuttān.*¹⁰¹ Church No. 3.

The central church in this place is a small structure which may be classed with those churches with a longitudinal system of interior supports. There are only two arches on either side of the main aisle, and these are carried on single oblong piers. The apse is unusual in being trapezoidal in plan and covered by flat slabs of stone. The side chambers take their plan from the standing side walls of the trapezoidal sanctuary.

*Simdj.*¹⁰²

This church is entirely in ruins; but it is important as being one of the three churches in Syria that had three apses, one at the end of each aisle (Ill. 118). The rest of the building is hardly distinguishable, but the three apses are plainly visible, the smaller ones preserving their half domes. The central apse has polygonal exterior walls, and the side apses are concealed by straight walls. All three apses are inhabited. Owing to the presence of three apses in the great church of Saint Simeon at ẖarʿat Simʿān, several writers have assumed that the triple apses might be taken as representative of the eastern disposition



Ill. 117.

of Syrian churches, but they fail to note that there are only five churches among the two hundred and fifty now known that have this deposition.¹⁰³ The church was a large one, nearly 30 m. long and 20 m. wide. The west end of the middle aisle terminated in the east wall of a small, square temple, the details of which assign it to the Nabataean period. In Chris-



Ill. 118.

¹⁰¹ P. II, A. p. 138, Ill. 119. ¹⁰² P. II, A. p. 108. ¹⁰³ These examples are listed and discussed in Chapter VII.

Early Churches in Syria

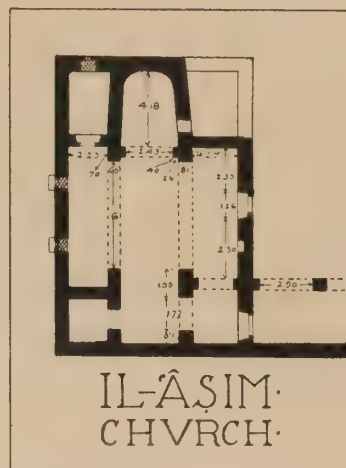
tian times an upper storey, perhaps two or more, was added to the highly finished walls of the temple, forming a tower at the west end, on the central axis of the church.

*Ṣabḥah. Double Church.*¹⁹⁴

The southern basilica of the Double Church at Ṣabḥah is to be counted in with this group. Its nave has three arches on either side, carried by square piers. The sanctuary, however, is a square apartment between oblong side chambers. The church apparently had a clearstorey with a wooden roof of gabled form over the middle aisle and roofs of stone over the side aisles. The caps of the piers show the usual bevelled form, but have, in addition, two torus mouldings and a scotia below the bevelled face.

*Umm idj-Djimâl. Church of the Barracks.*¹⁹⁵

This church, or chapel, was added to the quadrangle of the barracks at some time after they were completed. It protrudes its entire length eastward from the long side of the military structure, is of somewhat different masonry, and was not directly connected with the older building which is dated about 412 A.D. The nave is of the form common in this group of churches, with three arches carried on square piers in either side of the nave. The sanctuary is square, and the north side chamber is of the ordinary type with a doorway opening upon the end of the side aisle, but the south chamber not only gives upon the aisle by means of an arch, as is often the case in the prothesis, but opens upon the sanctuary by a similar arch. The side aisles had a flat roof of stone slabs, and the middle aisle had either a flat roof of wood or a gable roof set on the same level as the side aisles.



Ill. 119.

CLASS 2

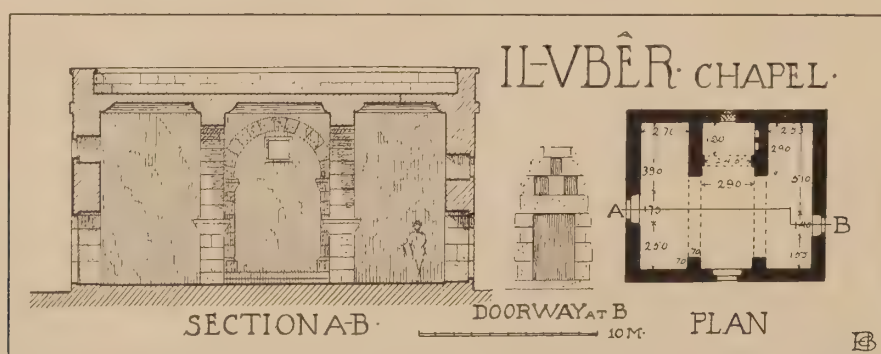
Churches and Chapels of Irregular Plans

*il-Âṣim.*¹⁹⁶

Among the later churches and chapels of Southern Syria, there are several buildings which do not conform in either plan or superstructure to any of the recognized types. Among these is a little church at il-Âṣim in the Ledjâ (Ill. 119). This church has a nave which is nearly square, divided longitudinally by a single broad arch on either side of the main aisle. The middle aisle terminates in an apse which has the form of a pointed ellipse. There is a chamber on the north side of the apse, but none on the south side.

*il-Ubêr.*¹⁹⁷

Near the monastery of il-Ubêr stands a small, detached church in a perfect state of preservation. Its north-and-south axis is a little longer than the other (Ill. 120). The building is divided into three nearly equal longi-



Ill. 120.

¹⁹⁴ P. II, A. p. 114.

¹⁹⁶ P. II, A. p. 431.

¹⁹⁵ P. II, A. pp. 168. and 190.

¹⁹⁷ P. II, A. p. 427.

tudinal parts by two broad, single arches which terminate toward the east in walls which form two sides of a square sanctuary. There are no side chambers saving the recesses on either side of the sanctuary. The whole church is roofed with stone slabs all on one level.

‘Uyûn.¹⁹⁸

The little church at ‘Uyûn is more or less of the type of the two foregoing examples, except that it has three arches which divide the nave into four longitudinal aisles (*Ill.* 191-I). The second aisle from the north is wider than the others and terminates in an apse; there is a chamber at the end of the north aisle and another which extends across the two south aisles. Here again the whole structure is covered with a flat roof of stone.

*Dêr idj-Djûwânî.*¹⁹⁹

This curious type is carried to further development in the church of a ruined convent at this place in the heart of the Ledjâ. Here there are five divisions or aisles formed by single arches, and the middle division terminates in an apse (*Ill.* 121). In all of these churches the system is that of the hall churches of the fourth century turned at right angles, so that the apse, instead of being at the end of a long structure with a transverse system of arches, is placed in the side of such a structure.

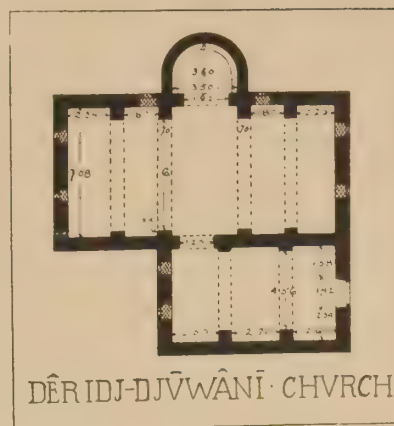
Chapels.

There are three small chapels which apparently belong to this century, all of which are of one type, having a nave that is nearly square and a protruding semicircular apse. The nave of the chapel at Umm is-Snêneh²⁰⁰ is slightly oblong; it shows no interior arches. The chapel at Waḡm²⁰¹ in the Ledjâ is nearly square and is spanned by a single transverse arch which carried the slabs of the flat roof. The half dome of the apse has fallen. At *Dêr idj-Djûwânî*²⁰² the little square chapel was also spanned by a transverse arch which has fallen; but the half dome of its apse is still in place (*Ill.* 191-E).

CLASS 3

Domed Churches of Central Plan

There are only two domed churches in Southern Syria and both of them were published by M. de Vogüé, — the Church of Saint George at Zor‘ah, ancient *Zorava*, and the Cathedral of *Bostra*. The former, which is the smaller of the two, was finished in 515 A.D. The latter is one of the largest ecclesiastical buildings in



Ill. 121.

Syria, and was completed in 512. But the Church of Saint George is in a perfect state of preservation, while the cathedral is much ruined, and, for this reason, it seems wise to discuss the later church first.

The building of vaults and domes was practiced in the province of Arabia during the Roman period in such buildings as the baths at *Bostra* and *Gerasa*. In the former only tunnel vaults, cloistered vaults and domes appear, but in the ruins of *Gerasa* we discover not only tunnel vaults, but also a remarkable example of a flat dome set upon pendentives, both built of well dressed blocks of limestone. In Boṣrâ too, there is a tomb with a dome of well fitted stone blocks, but this is set upon a circular wall. The erection of vault structures in the Ḥaurân was greatly facilitated and simplified by the presence in the mountains of deposits of volcanic scoriac, or cinders, a very light, hard and durable material, which, when mixed with cement, formed an ideal substance for dome and vault construction. This excellent material appears in tunnel vaults, in an octagonal dome and in a square cloistered vault in the baths at Boṣrâ²⁰³ and in a dome in the *Kalibé* at Umm iz-Zêtûn,²⁰⁴ both third century structures, and in many of the half domes of the apses in Pagan and Christian buildings of the fourth century. Only three domes, of all those which formerly existed in Southern Syria, are sufficiently intact to leave no doubt of their original form and construction, and all of them have different forms. These are, a flat, octagonal dome in the South Baths at Boṣrâ,²⁰⁵ the crown of which has fallen without destroying evidence of its shape and construction, a cloistered vault in the same building, which is intact, and the dome of the Church of Saint George at Zor‘ah, which is also perfectly preserved. All were built of volcanic scoriac and cement. The last of the three examples is the only one with

¹⁹⁸ *P.* II, A. p. 331.

¹⁹⁹ *P.* II, A. p. 436.

²⁰⁰ *P.* II, A. p. 107, *Ill.* 85.

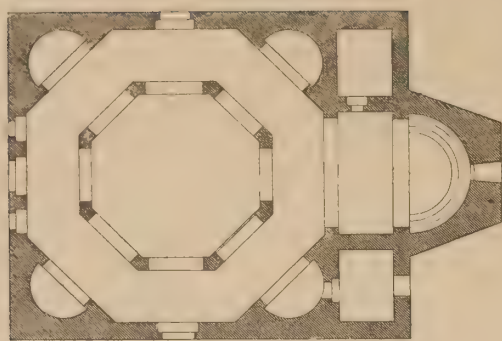
²⁰¹ *P.* II, p. 417, *Ill.* 356.

²⁰² *P.* II, 436.

²⁰³ *P.* II, A. p. 260.

²⁰⁴ *S. C.*, Pl. 6, text, p. 43. *P.* II, A. p. 361.

²⁰⁵ *P.* II, A. *Ill.* 230, Pl. XIII.



Ill. 122. Zor'ah. Church of St. George,
plan. Date: 515 A.D.

a circular base. Its form is that of a tall, pointed ellipse, the form commonly seen in the native mud domes still to be counted by the hundreds in the villages of the flatter portion of Northern Syria. This sugar-loaf form was chosen because it is more easily built than domes of other shapes, requiring no centring except at the very apex. M. de Vogüé, and others, restore the fallen domes of other buildings in Syria, such as that of the *Kalybé* at Umm iz-Zētûn²⁰⁶ and that of the cathedral of Boşrā²⁰⁷ as hemispheres; but it is very doubtful if this form of dome existed at all in Syria, especially in the South. It certainly seems more logical to assume that all these domes followed the native form, the form represented by the only example of a dome with a circular base still existing in the country.

Zor'ah (Zorava). Church of St. George.²⁰⁸ 515 A.D.

The name of this place was given as Ezra by the earlier explorers who did not observe that the natives, in repeating the name, placed the article *ez* before the name Zor'ah, as they do in many cases. The domed church here, which antedates by several years the famous domes of Constantinople and Ravenna, presents a plan of unusual interest (Ill. 122). Its outlines have the form of a rectangle with its major axis lying east and west. At the east end a space equal to the difference between the rectangle and the square of its shorter side is set off for two side chambers with a bema between them. From the bema opens a semicircular apse enclosed within three faces of a hexagon. Within the square to the west of the sanctuary an octagon was created by cutting off the interior angles and filling them with semicircular chapels; and within this great octagon, a smaller one, 9 m. in diameter, was formed by eight angle piers carrying arches. There are three doorways in the west side of the outer octagon, one in the north side and one in the south. The outer walls were carried up to a level

somewhat higher than the crowns of the eight arches, and roofs of stone slabs were placed over both the circumambient aisle and the bema. The apse was given a half dome of concrete. The eight arches were, of course, intended to support the dome, but above this level all the former publications of this building are at fault. The interior is very dark, and M. de Vogüé apparently did not observe the actual construction, for in his drawing he carries up the wall above the arches in octagonal form, to which he adjusts the circle of the dome by stone beams laid across the angles, following the manner of construction seen in the dome at Umm iz-Zētûn, and his error has been repeated in numerous books. As a matter of fact, no angle whatever is visible above the springing of the arches. The masonry in the spandrels at once begins to warp forward as may be seen in the photograph (Ill. 123-A) and, at the level of the crowns of the arches, no angles are to be seen. At this level are placed two courses of finely dressed stone blocks, with notches cut in the upper surface of the lower course, and tongues cut upon the lower surface of the course above, so that the two are locked together as if the work were so much carpentry. Above this, a wall, circular within and octagonal without, rises about two metres above the aisle roofs; windows were placed over each of the eight arches, and the tall, sugar-loaf dome was placed directly upon this drum, the transition from the octagon to the circle having been made by imperceptible degrees in the building up of the stone work. The entire building is constructed of highly finished blocks of basalt, but the present effect has been much injured by high walls of rough stone added to the main walls and to the apse in recent years (Ill. 123-B). The ornament of the church, such as it is, is massed upon the west façade, where a string moulding of good Classical profile is carried across the wall and over a high relieving arch above the portal. The lintel of the middle portal is a single stone under a relieving arch, and has a long inscription upon it, at the ends of which are low relief carvings of crosses intertwined with grape vines. The inscription reads as follows: *This has become a house of God which (was once) a lodging-place of demons . . . where (once were) idols' sacrifices, now (are) choirs of angels, and where God was provoked to wrath, now God is propitiated. A certain man, Christ-loving, the primate Ioannes, son of Diomedes, at his own expense, as a gift to God, made offering of (this) noble stucture, placing herein the reverend relic of (the) holy martyr Georgios, the gloriously victorious, who appeared to him,*

²⁰⁶ S. C. Pl. 6, text, p. 43.

²⁰⁷ S. C. text, pp. 63—67.

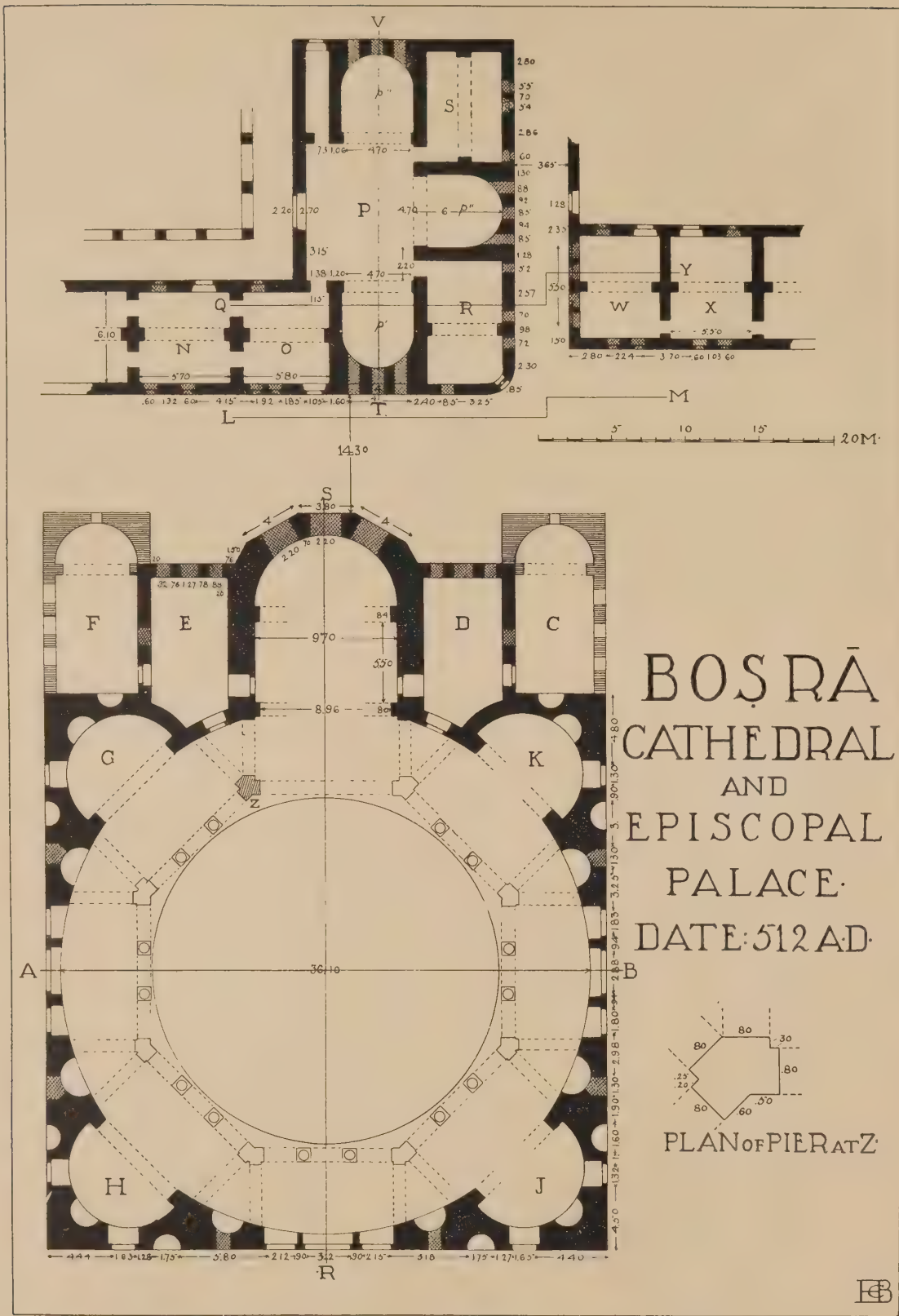
²⁰⁸ S. C. Pl. 21. A. II, p. 411 f.



Ill. 123-A. Zor'ah. Church of St. George, interior-looking Northeast.



Ill. 123-B. Zor'ah. Church of St. George, exterior from the East.



Ill. 124.

*Ioannes, and not in sleep, but manifestly, in (indiction) 9, year 410*²⁰⁹ (515 A.D.). The inscription implies that the church occupies the site of a Pagan temple.

*Boṣrā, (Bostra). Cathedral.*²¹⁰ 512 A.D.

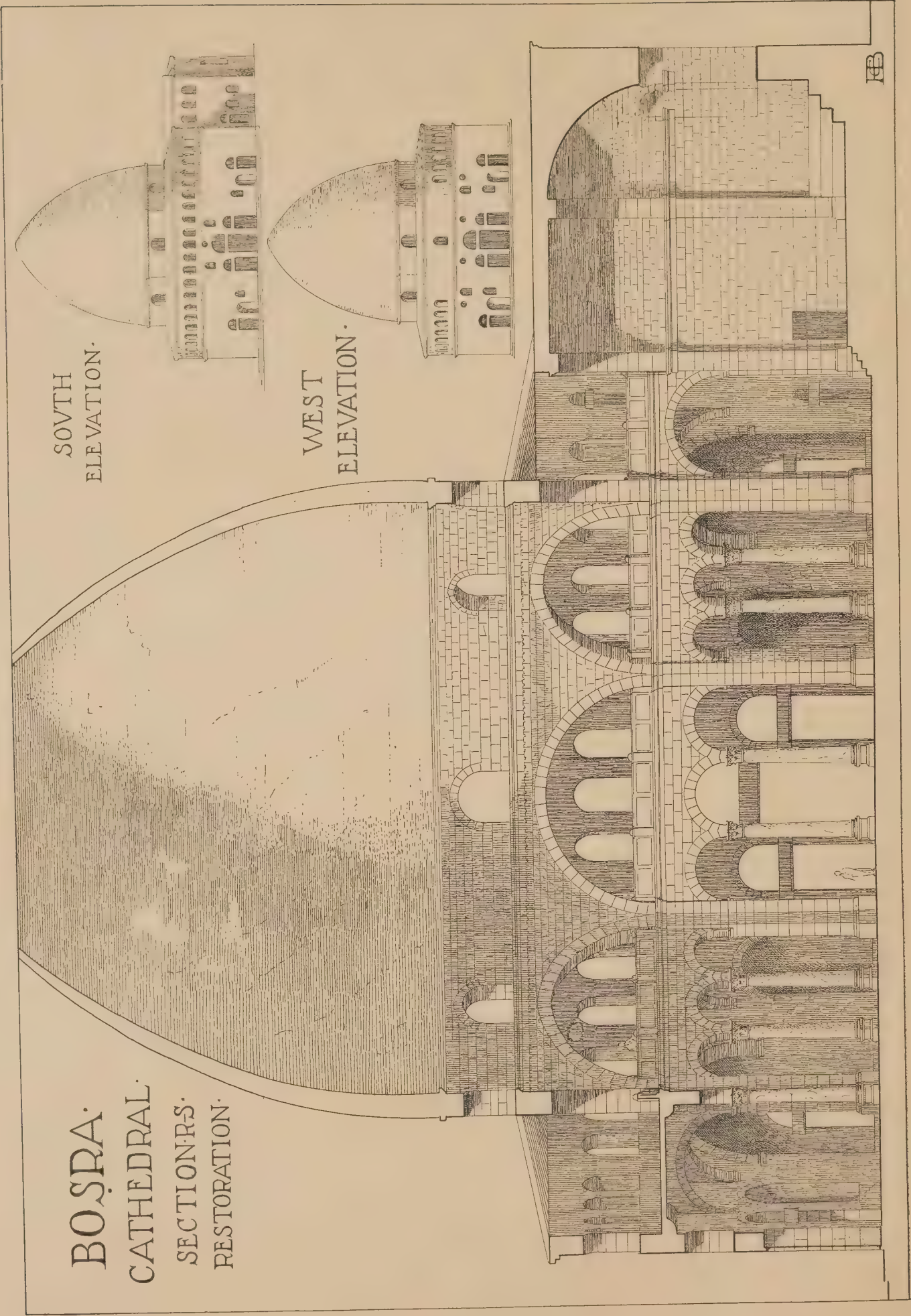
The study of the Cathedral of Boṣrā is a very different matter. Here the great dome and all of its substructions had fallen before it was first published by M. de Vogüé, and the remainder is far more ruinous than in his day. The masses of débris within the interior, — to say nothing of the fact that the natives of the town employed the cathedral as a place for the storage of dung from the kahns, — have made impossible an observation of the arrangement of the interior supports of the dome. M. de Vogüé published the plan without showing any interior supports, and others have attempted to restore the interior according to various conjectures. But M. de Vogüé published a suggestion for the restoration in which he placed eight interior piers upon a circle, connecting them with arches, and placed two columns under each arch to carry architraves for the support of a gallery on a level with the springing of the great arches. A circular drum rose above the flat roof of the gallery, like the drum at Zor'ah, and a hemispherical dome rested upon this. This is by far the most satisfactory of the restorations that were made before the discovery of one of the interior piers and of other features which have made the restoration of the church a far simpler task.

In 1909, owing to a fire which had destroyed a greater part of the dung-heap inside the church, a single pier was found just west of the north side of the opening into the apse. With the aid of this, the following plan is made out. The exterior outlines of the plan show a great square, with a bema and apse with two side chambers protruding from the middle three-fifths of its eastern side; the apse is enclosed in part of a decagon (*Ill.* 124). The small chambers with apses which are shown as flanking the side chambers and filling the eastern angles, are late and crude additions. Within the great square a circle, 36 m. in diameter, is so closely inscribed that the arch of the bema breaks into it on the east, and there are groups of three doorways each penetrating the other three sides of the square. The solid angles between the circle and the square are filled with apses that have niches with windows or doorways in them, and other niches, exterior and interior, are used to lighten the thickest parts of the walls. Above the crowns of the angle apses the outer wall of the building was carried up as a huge circular drum, the bema was covered by a tunnel

vault, and the apse by a half dome. The three windows in the apse are extremely large. Inside the great circle was built an octagon, 24 m. in diameter, composed of eight arches carried upon piers of irregular shape, as shown in *Ill.* 125. The shape of the piers and the springers of the arches, still to be seen in the circular wall, show that each of these piers provided imposts for four different arches i. e. two of the main arches of the octagon at one level, and two narrower arches which sprang at an acute angle from a lower level, in order to span the aisle and to divide the ceiling of the aisle into alternate rectangles and triangles, as in several later European churches. These arches over the aisle supported, or helped to support, the slabs of the floor of a gallery upon the level of the springing of the great arches, beneath which the gallery was carried on an order of sub-arches supported by columns, — three arches and two columns in each of the main arches except that on the east which opened unbroken into the bema and apse. The gallery was thus stopped on either side of the entrance to the bema. The outer wall of the gallery was the circular drum referred to above. It is impossible to discover whether the gallery was roofed in wood or in stone. Practically every detail of the reconstruction up to this point is actually accounted for in the ruin as it stands, or as M. de Vogüé describes it. Above this, it must be restored on the analogy of Saint George's church at Zor'ah, which is only three years later and only a few miles distant. Upon this assumption the masonry between the great arches would be gradually warped out until a circle was formed, a low drum, pierced with windows, would be raised above the roofs of the galleries, and a tall, pointed dome would crown the structure. This great dome, about 24 metres in diameter, would be second in size only to the dome of Hagia Sophia among the Christian domes of the first thousand years of the Church's history. The masonry of the exterior is one of the most perfect specimens of highly finished stonework in Southern Syria, but its ornamental details were rather scanty. The cornices of the walls of the great square and of the apse with its side chambers appear to have been purloined from some Classical building, for it consists of a corona carved with the straight strigil ornament and a sima carved with rich anthemions. This same decoration is reproduced on the archivolt of the chancel arch in the interior of the church, where the only other ornament now visible is to be found in the pedestals and white marble capitals of the columns which divided the great arches. The shafts of these columns were of cipollino marble.

²⁰⁹ *A.* III, insc. 437a.

²¹⁰ *S. C.* text, pp. 63—67. Pl. 22. *P.* II, A. pp. 281—286.



Ill. 125.

It is by no means impossible that the interior faces of the walls were revetted with marble slabs, and that other forms of decoration were used. Some of the early visitors to Boṣrā mention the remains of wall paintings. The parapet of the gallery would have offered an opportunity for rich and interesting ornament. The church was dedicated to Saints Sergios, Bacchos and

Leontios in the following inscription which Waddington found above the west portal: *Under the most God-beloved and most holy Iulianos, archbishop, was built and completed the holy church of Sergios, Bacchos and Leontios, martyrs, who received the prize and triumphed gloriously. In the year 407, sixth indiction. (512—513 A.D.).*

3. CHURCHES OF NORTHERN SYRIA

Churches dated in the years: 501, 507, 535, 546, 561, 585, 602 and 610 A.D.

Chapels dated in the years: 513, 515, 532, 536 and 567 A.D.

IT will be convenient to discuss the ecclesiastical buildings of Northern Syria under classifications, according to the variations of their ground plans as follows: class 1, basilical churches with columnar supports and having apses; class 2, basilicas with columnar supports and having rectangular sanctuaries; class 3, basilicas with piers and broad arches, having either apses or rectangular sanctuaries; class 4, chapels of various plans and class 5, baptisteries. Within each of these classes will be found minor variations in plan as well as in smaller details. There are in Northern Syria 32 churches and 27 chapels and baptisteries, which may be assigned to the sixth century; of these, eight of the churches, one of the chapels and five of the baptisteries are dated by inscriptions.

CLASS I

Basilicas with Columnar Supports and having Apses

The first class perpetuates the ground plan of the earliest churches in Northern Syria. It is represented in the sixth century by only eight examples. These vary in the number of bays in the nave, and in the arrangement of the east end, five having straight east walls concealing the apse, and three showing the curve of the apse between the side chambers. One of the former has side chambers which project slightly at the sides, and one of the latter presents a polygonal apse. All are comparatively large chambers, and all are rich in decorative details. Three of them were published in *La Syrie Centrale*.

*Dêr Sim'ân. Church of West Monastery.*²¹¹

This church has been described in connection with the discussion of the West Monastery at Dêr Sim'ân in the last chapter. Its plan is that of a typical church of the fifth century (*Ill.* 105—107), but there are certain details of its ornament, like the use of incised

mouldings, on a grand scale, which would assign it to the early years of the sixth century. Its east wall is straight, the apse is directly connected with the diaconicon on the north, the diaconicon itself gives upon the aisle by means of a doorway, while the prothesis is provided with an arched entrance. There are three windows in the apse. All of this part of the church is preserved up to and including the lower courses on the half dome. The nave had six bays, one large and one small doorway in the west front, and had portals in each of the side walls. The windows of the ground storey are large and numerous. All the side entrances were provided with distyle porches, and a colonnade of eight columns formed the western porch. The interior of the apse is decorated with a variety of mouldings, those of the pier-caps being exceptionally elaborate. A deep impost moulding below the half dome is returned outward above the pier-caps, and the mouldings of the archivolt are returned above this, giving a very rich appearance. The doorway of the diaconicon has deep frame mouldings and a moulded door-cap, while the arch of the prothesis has incised mouldings. The caps of the responds at the ends of the arcades are decorated with elaborate mouldings and the archivolts of the arches have incised moulded decoration. The capitals are more nearly of the pure Classical Corinthian form than most of the capitals of the Christian period in Syria, and the technique of their carving is sharp and virile. The exterior abounds in mouldings both incised and in relief. There is no base moulding; but the string course at the window line and the door-frames are salient and well balanced mouldings. The window mouldings are all incised, and are carried from opening to opening along the top of the string course, up the jambs of the portals and over the relieving arches above the entrances. The west front (*Ill.* 126) had a great window in the storey above the main portal

²¹¹ *P.* II, B. pp. 270—274, *Ills.* 286—291.

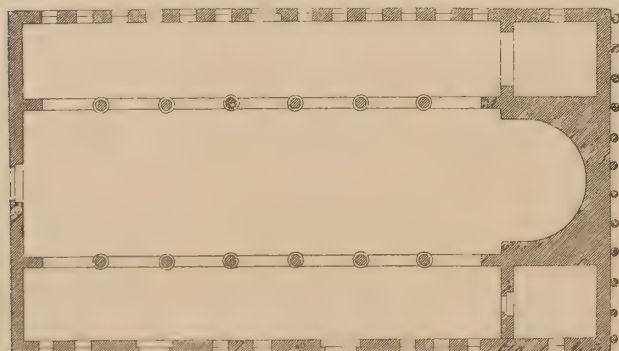


Ill. 126. Dêr Sim'ân. Church of West Monastery, façade from the West.

composed of a broad arch between two narrow ones, all three carried upon slender Corinthian collonnettes.

*Dêr Sêtā. Church.*²¹²

In plan, the church of Dêr Sêtā follows the old-fashioned type (*Ill. 127*), but there are no openings between the apse and the side chambers, and the north chamber has the arched entrance. A fine baptistery adjoins the church at its southeast angle. At present the north and south walls of the nave are well preserved, and offer a number of beautiful and interesting details. The east and west ends, on the contrary, have been wholly destroyed. M. de Vogüé's plan shows no windows in the apse, and none in the east walls of the side chambers; but it does show a row of twelve columns engaged to the straight east



Ill. 127. Dêr Sêtā. Church, plan.

wall. These were carried upon brackets, set at a low level, and were purely ornamental in character. The north wall which was erected upon a high substructure has a doorway in the middle, and six large windows on either side of it; the south wall has two portals and seven large windows. Base mouldings and moulded string courses were used throughout. The window mouldings are deeply incised and continuous, being carried in curves between the openings on the north side, and in right-angles on the south. The frame mouldings of the south portal terminate in spirals. The ovolo door-caps are beautiful examples of rinceaux executed in colouristic manner, (*Ill. 128*) and the capitals of the nave arcades, though tall and concave in form, were executed in the same technique (*Ill. 129*).

*Bāṣūfān. West Church.*²¹³

The West Church at Bāṣūfān was among the larger churches of the Djebel Sim'ân. It is in complete ruins, but its broken ornamental details suggest a date within the first quarter of the sixth century. The nave had eight bays, the east wall was straight and the south chamber had an arched entrance.

*Burdaqlī. South Church.*²¹⁴

There were two churches at Burdaqlī, in the Djebel Ḥalaḡah; one is entirely ruined, the other preserves its outer walls intact, though all the débris of the

²¹² S. C. pl. 116. A. II, p. 195.

²¹³ P. II, B. p. 285, *Ill.* 308.

²¹⁴ P. II, B. p. 235.



Ill. 128. Dêr Sêtā. Church, exterior showing portal and window in south wall.

fallen interior supports and the walls above them have been removed, and the building has been converted into a cattle pen by nomadic Turkmads. The apse is deep and broad in proportion to the size of the church, the side chambers are long and narrow, the diaconicon, on the north, is reached directly from the apse, as well as by a doorway in the end of the aisle, the prothesis has an arched entrance (*Ill. 130*). All the mouldings of the exterior of this church which are preserved are incised. There were probably five bays in the nave; but the columns with their capitals and the responds at the ends of the arcade have been removed, probably in connexion with the building of a Mediaeval mosque which still dominates the deserted and ruined town.

Bānķūsā. South Church. ²¹⁵

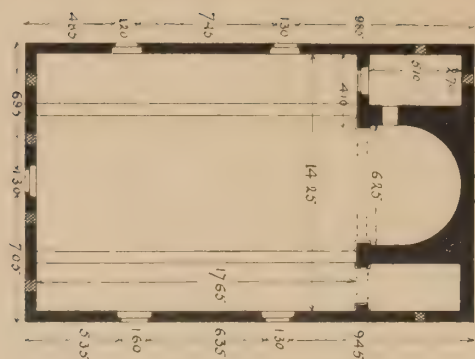
This church is one of those fully published by M. de Vogüé. It preserves its outer walls almost intact, and only the upper parts of the half dome of the apse and the interior arches have collapsed. The nave had six bays (*Ill. 131*). An apse, with three windows, displays a part of its curve between the walls of the side chambers. There was a low enclosed narthex extending across the west front, with three arched openings set upon columns, and there were two distyle porches on either side of the nave. The doorways and windows are large. The ornament of the exterior closely resembles that of the church of Dêr Sêtā, with

its base mouldings, string course, and doorframes, all in relief, and its window mouldings deeply incised. The door-caps are of ovolo form; but are undecorated. The exterior cornice of the apse was supported by colonnettes set in brackets between the arches of the apse windows. The capitals of the interior arcades are a curious mixture of plastic and colouristic treatment; the general lines are those of a Corinthian capital, the number of leaves is the same, but there are no volutes and no cauliculi. The leaves themselves, though they have salient curling tips, are treated in an unusual manner (*Ill. 132*), as is shown in M. de Vogüé's drawing.



Ill. 129. Dêr Sêtā. Church, showing capitals in ruins.

²¹⁵ S. C. Pl. 118. A. II, p. 193.



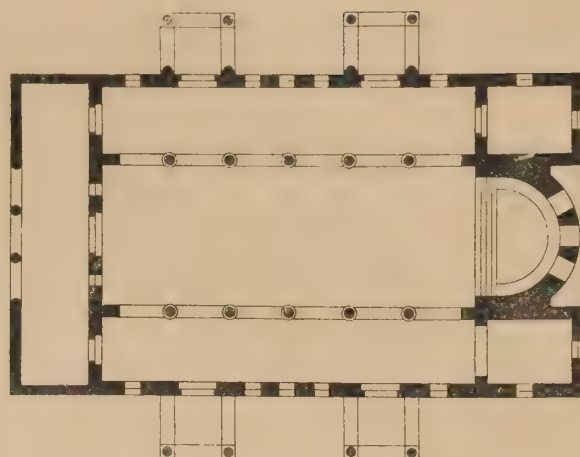
Ill. 130. Burdaklı. South Church, plan.

²¹⁶ *Arşin.*

There is only a fragment of this church standing; this is the apse with its half dome. This shows a reproduction of the apse of Bānķūsā, in a better state of preservation (Ill. 133). The entire structure of the nave and side chambers has been destroyed, and the materials have been carried away for the building of two modern villages on the edge of the plain to the east. The half dome was apparently spared through fear that its collapse would injure its destroyers. The arch and the dome itself are much stilted. The impost moulding is a heavy uncarved ovolo, the pier caps are effectively adorned with Corinthian foliage, and the salient mouldings of the archivolt are returned above them. The exterior shows a base moulding, a string course on the level of the windowsills and one at the springing of the half dome. The window mouldings are in relief and are looped between the openings. Above the upper string course were set six large brackets which carry blocks with conchas cut in them, as we have seen at Ǧal'at Sim'ān, and upon these was set the cornice.

Der Termānīn. Church. ²¹⁷

The church of the monastery of Dêr Termānīn has also been entirely destroyed; only a small section of its south wall is standing. The building has served as a quarry for the building of a village on the edge of the Sermedā Plain. This church has been made familiar to students of architecture through the plates of *La Syrie Centrale*, which have been reproduced in books in many languages. Its plan is given in the chapter on the monasteries (Ill. 98). Though conforming to the usual basilical plan so far as the arrangement of its nave is concerned, this church presents an interesting combination of the churches of Ǧalb Lauzeh and Bānķūsā; for its west end was composed of an arched narthex between square towers, and its east end shows its apse on the exterior. The apse, however, was



Ill. 131. Bānķūsā. South Church, plan.

polygonal and its half dome seven-sided. In its ornament the church followed the general scheme of Bānķūsā, except that all the mouldings were in relief, and the colonnettes which adorned the exterior of the apse rose from projecting ressauts in the wall instead of from brackets higher up. The towers of the west façade were a storey higher than those of Ǧalb Lauzeh. Between them was a loggia of four columns. The gable ends had each a circular window with a plate of tracery in the form of a cross.

Ĥāss. South Church. ²¹⁸

The great basilica at Ĥāss was the largest of this group. It is situated in the southern end of the Djebel Rîḥā. Some writers, basing their judgments entirely upon the drawings in *La Syrie Centrale*, have given the church dates as early as the fifth and fourth centuries; but most of its details are characteristic of sixth century work. The churches of the Djebel Rîḥā are, on the whole, much plainer than those of the northern parts of Northern Syria, and it is probably the lack of window mouldings that has caused its assignment to the earlier dates. Only a tower at the southeast angle and a long stretch of the south wall are in situ; the remainder of the structure has been actually



Ill. 132. Bānķūsā. South Church, capital (after de Vogüé).

²¹⁶ A. II, p. 198.

²¹⁷ S. C. Pls. 130, 132—136. A. II, p. 196.

²¹⁸ S. C. Pls. 65, 66. A. II, p. 219.



Ill. 133. 'Arshin. Church, exterior of apse.

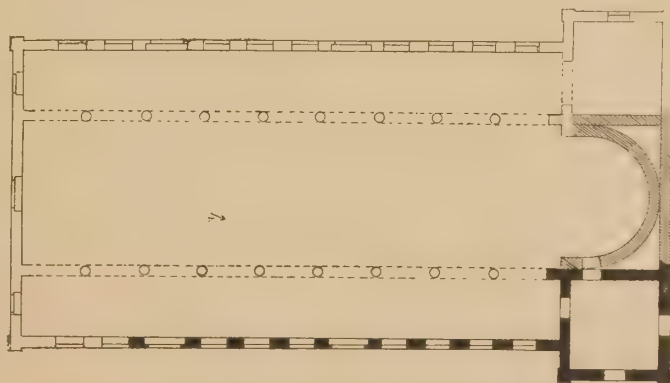
carried off, leaving only a few foundation stones, from which, with the aid of M. de Vogüé's plate, the plan is easily drawn (Ill. 134). There was a long nave, probably of nine bays. The foundations show an apse within a straight wall. The apse was flanked by square chambers which project beyond the nave walls. The south chamber, and probably also the north chamber, was carried up in a high tower. M. de Vogüé's plan shows an open narthex of eight columns at the west end. The interior arrangement of the east end was unusual (Ill. 135). The bema was much elevated and was carried across the side chambers. The entrance to the south chamber is over two metres higher than the floor-level of the nave. The eastern respond of the south arcade is elevated to this same height, and it has the form of a fluted Corinthian pilaster. A low doorway in the wall of the side chamber shows that there was a crypt under the bema. The prothesis, as we may call this south chamber, was thus in an upper storey. The lower storey was entered by outside doorways on the east and south. The prothesis itself had two large windows to the south, and two of very unusual dimensions, quite equal to Gothic windows, on the east (Ill. 136). The south wall had two portals and nine very large windows, seven of which have been preserved. The doorways have moulded relieving arches above them, and their frames and door-caps are mouldings of elaborate profile, but devoid of carved

ornament. A deep string moulding runs the entire length of the aisle wall, and is carried around the angle tower; the great arcuated windows above it are entirely plain. The cornice is a high cavetto, almost Egyptian in form. A moulded string course encircles the tower at a level above the cornice of the aisle wall, and the third storey is pierced with rectangular openings surmounted with moulded window-caps. The exterior angles have pilasters, without bases or caps, from top to bottom of the tower. The remains of this church are extremely interesting.

CLASS 2

Basilicas with Rectangular Sanctuaries

There are eighteen churches belonging to this class, most of them smaller structures, some very plain, and



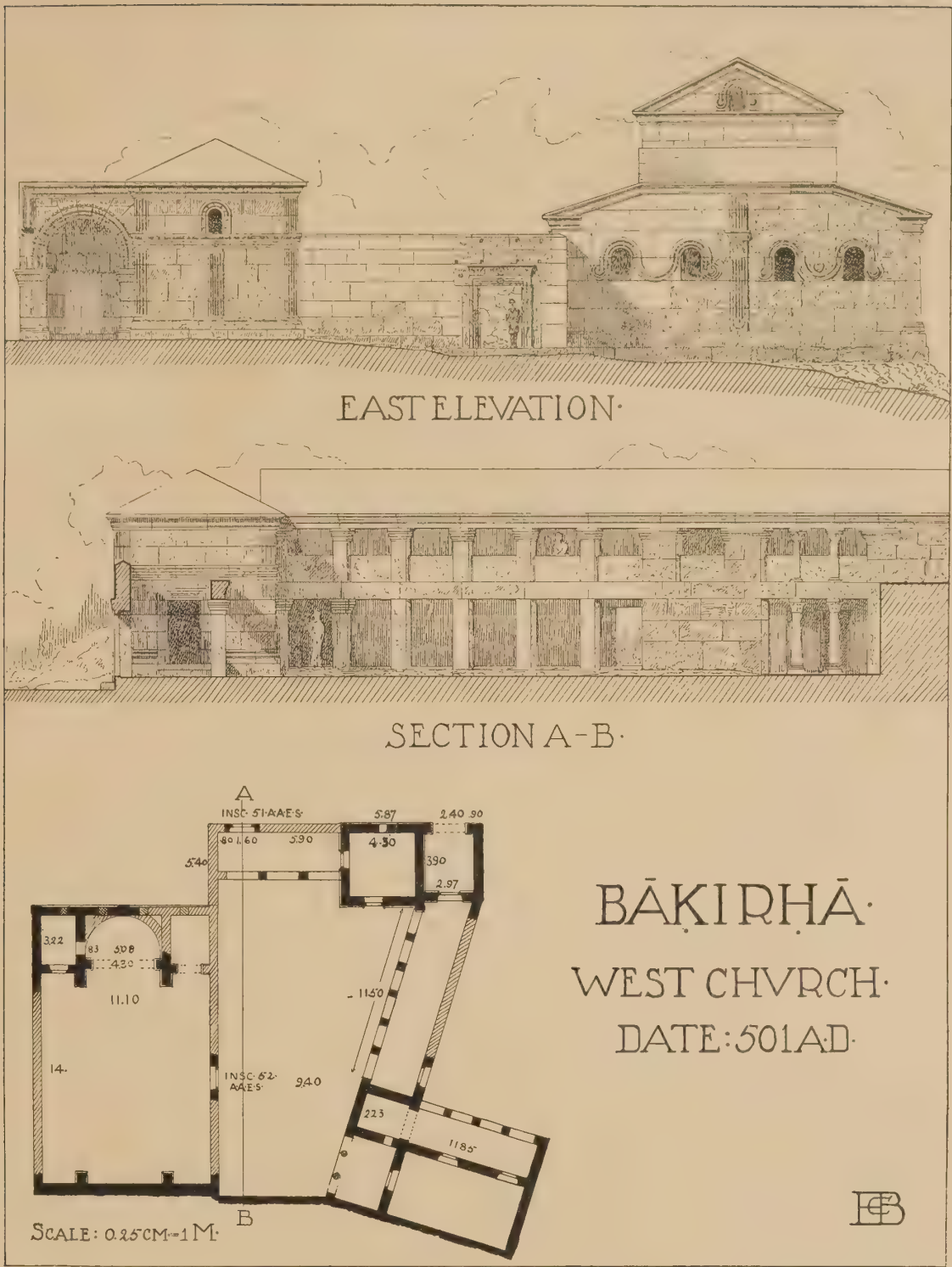
Ill. 134. Hâss. South Church, plan.



Ill. 135. Hâss. South Church, interior looking Southeast.



Ill. 136. Hâss. South Church, exterior from the South.



Ill. 137.

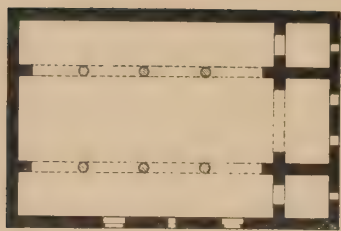
others extremely rich in their decorations. Their differences have to do chiefly with the disposition of the narthex, and with the arrangement of the roofs at the east end, where most of the churches have lean-to roofs, but where a few are covered by a continuation of the main gable roof of the nave. Three of these churches have piers and broad arches in place of

columns and narrow arches, but these fall into another class. It will be noticed that all but three of the group are situated in the Djebel Bārīshā, and that the others are in the immediate neighbourhood.

*Bākirhā. West Church.*²¹⁹ 501 A.D.

The inscription which gives this earliest date of the

²¹⁹ A. II. p. 190. P. II. B. p. 195.

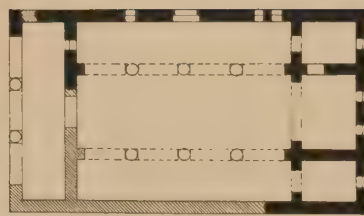


Ill. 138. *Khirbit Hasan.*
Church, plan.

century was not written upon the church itself, but upon the gateway to the close on the north side of the church, which appears to have been erected at the time when the present structure of the church was built; I say, present structure, because there are remains in the débris of the ruins which suggest an earlier structure. Foundations of a semicircular apse are visible inside the rectangular sanctuary (Ill. 137) and there are Ionic capitals and the lintel of a doorway that have all the marks of fourth century work. The part of the structure which is standing and adjoins the gateway with the dated inscription, is the east wall; all the rest of the building has been thrown down. This wall embodies many of the decorative details which appeared in the end of the fifth century and other details which are new. There were four windows in the east end, two in the sanctuary and one in each of the side chambers. Two of these are in situ. Heavy mouldings are carried over the arches of the windows, draped in a festoon between them, and terminate in spiral loops (Ill. 229). An ornamental disc or boss, appears above the downward curve of the moulding. At the angles are grooved pilasters with foliate caps, and a similar pilaster with an ornamental disc below its cap, is directly in the middle of the wall. If the date of the gateway is actually the date of this wall, we have here the earliest dated example of the use of pilasters in the Christian architecture of Syria.

Khirbit Hasan. ²²⁰ 507 A.D.

The church at this place is one of the plainest of the churches of the sixth century. It was built of very large quadrated blocks of stone. The nave has four bays (Ill. 138) and there are two entrances, both on the south wall. The rectangular sanctuary has two windows; the side chambers are square and have one east window each. These side chambers were covered by extensions of the aisle roofs. The sanctuary was covered by a lean-to roof at right angles to the others. The exterior ornament consists of the cornices of the walls, and the incised mouldings of the windows of the side chambers,



Ill. 140. *Dêhes. West Church, plan.*

which compose complete frames around the openings. The only portal decorations consist of trapezoidal door-caps in relief, one of which is adorned with bands of fine pattern carving (Ill. 139) with a large ornamental disc in the middle, the other is ornamented with a row of ornamental discs above a broad band which bears a long inscription in Syriac. The inscription is unusually interesting because it is one of the few which mentions the subject of the cost of building. It reads as follows: *In the year five hundred and fifty six, according to the era of Antioch, this church was completed. And there were spent upon it eighty five darics, and four hundred and thirty bushels of beans, wheat, and lentils, besides the chief expenses.* ²²¹ It is unfortunate that the form in which the statement is made renders it useless to us as a means of determining the costs according to modern standards. The beans, wheat and lentils were probably the gifts of the people of the parish, and must have been used in barter to pay labourers or to purchase materials; for the amount would have been considerably more than could have been used to feed the workmen upon a building of this size. The church of Khirbit Hasan is now a sheepfold, and has probably served as such for centuries. The interior arches have fallen, but some of the columns have been re-erected and their supports have been added to carry a crude roof of tree-trunks, wattles and earth.

Dêhes. West Church and East Church.

The West Church ²²² at Dêhes is a little smaller than the foregoing (Ill. 140) but its plan is almost the same. Its nave had three bays, and its rectangular sanctuary was lighted by two windows; but the sanctuary has a doorway opening into the diaconicon, on the north, and the entrance to the prothesis was an arch. There was a single portal on the north side and one to the west where there was a columned narthex with closed ends. The interior columns had capitals of a plain, uncut Corinthian type. The windows were all provided with incised mouldings which were confined to the openings. These window mouldings and the main cornice constituted the exterior ornament.

²²⁰ A. II, p. 199.

²²¹ Littmann, A. IV, p. 15, insc. 6.

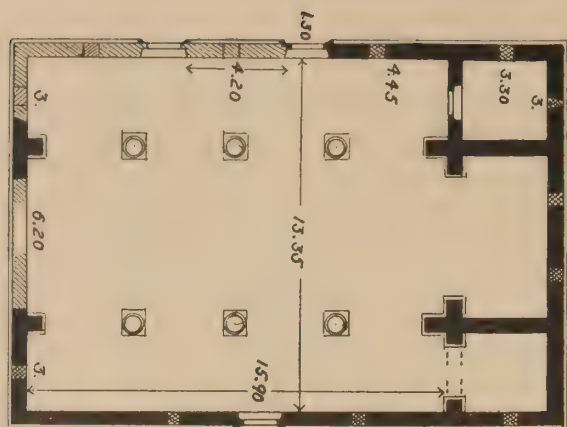
²²² A II, 206.



Ill. 139. Khirbit Hasan. Church, exterior from the South.



Ill. 141. Dêhes. East Church, portal in South wall.

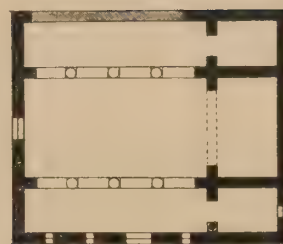


Ill. 143. *Dâr Kîṭā. Church of the Trinity, plan.*

The East Church²²³ of this same deserted town is so completely ruined that its plan could not be accurately drawn, but it appears to have been of the same type and size as the West Church. The south wall, part of which is still standing, preserves an interesting portal (Ill. 141) with cusped frame mouldings and a bevel-faced door-cap ornamented with upright acanthus leaves. One end of the lintel bears a small arched panel of relief carving, the other a torch or lamp-stand. The window mouldings are incised and are not continuous. In the same group of buildings with this church is a very interesting baptistery described later in these pages.

*Dâr Kîṭā. Church of St. Sergios.*²²⁴ 537 and 567 A.D.

A church somewhat larger than either of the foregoing is Saint Sergios' at Dâr Kîṭā (Ill. 142). Here the east end is almost perfectly preserved, and the lower storey of the west wall is standing; but the side walls and interior supports have collapsed. The nave had four bays; there was a western narthex consisting of four columns between end walls, and there were two side entrance in either aisle, the north portals being provided with distyle porches, and the south side having a continuous colonnade terminating against the baptistery which adjoins the southeast angle of the church. The building shows a base moulding and heavy cornices; the windows have relief mouldings which are not continuous. The sanctuary was covered by a lean-to, the prothesis by a continuation of the roof of the south aisle; but the diaconicon was carried up into a tower. The ornament of the great west portal is a rather crude imitation of the portal of the church of Paul and Moses in the same town, which is dated 418 A.D. (cf. Ill. 50).



Ill. 144. *Ksêdjbeh. West Church, plan.*

*Dâr Kîṭā. "Church of the Trinity".*²²⁵

Of exactly the same type and dimensions is "Trinity Church" in this same ruined town (Ill. 143). Only the east and the south walls are standing, all the rest of the building is in ruins; but the windows have deep mouldings that are continued from one opening to another and often terminate in loops. The interior capitals are of a well cut Corinthian design, and the caps of the responds are of a beautiful wind-blown type (Ill. 262).

*Bāmuḳḳā. Church.*²²⁶

The church of Bāmuḳḳā differs in no respect from the others, so far as its plan is concerned, though a baptistery is attached to its southeast angle. The church is without a base moulding; but the mouldings of the windows, which are incised, are returned outward at the sill-level and carried along a short distance only to be sharply cut off.

*Dera'mân. West Church.*²²⁷

The West Church of Dera'mân belongs to the same group. It had a base moulding and moulded windows, and its two south portals were protected by distyle porches.

*Kôkanâya. Church.*²²⁸

A completely ruined church in the southern part of the large ruin of Kôkanâya appears to have belonged to this class. Only a part of the north wall is standing; but this shows rich interior ornament in the form of a base moulding, a string moulding and window mouldings, as well as a fine doorway and a deep cornice.

*Kefr Kîlā. Church.*²²⁹

The church of Kefr Kîlā is difficult to study because it is inhabited; but it certainly has the plan of the type under discussion, and its dimensions are about the same as those of the church at Dehes. One of

²²³ A. II, p. 205.

²²⁶ A. II, p. 208, Fig. 82.

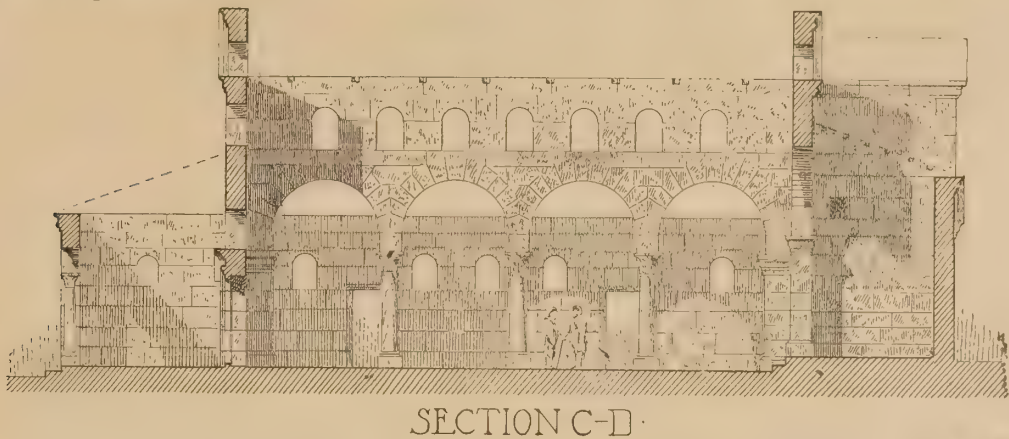
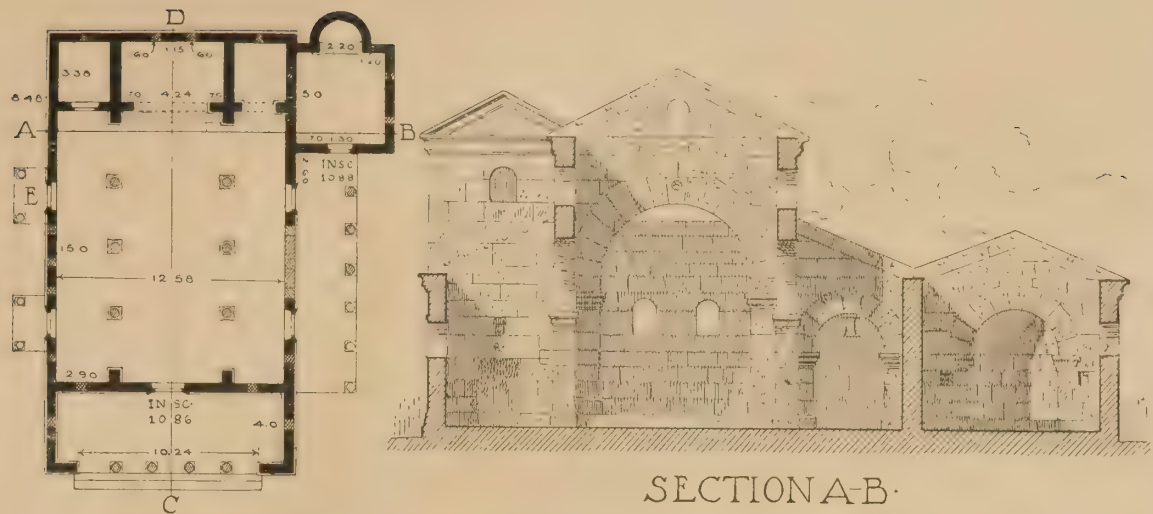
²²⁸ S. C. Pl. 120. A. II, p. 213.

²²⁴ A. II, p. 202. P. II, B. p. 184.

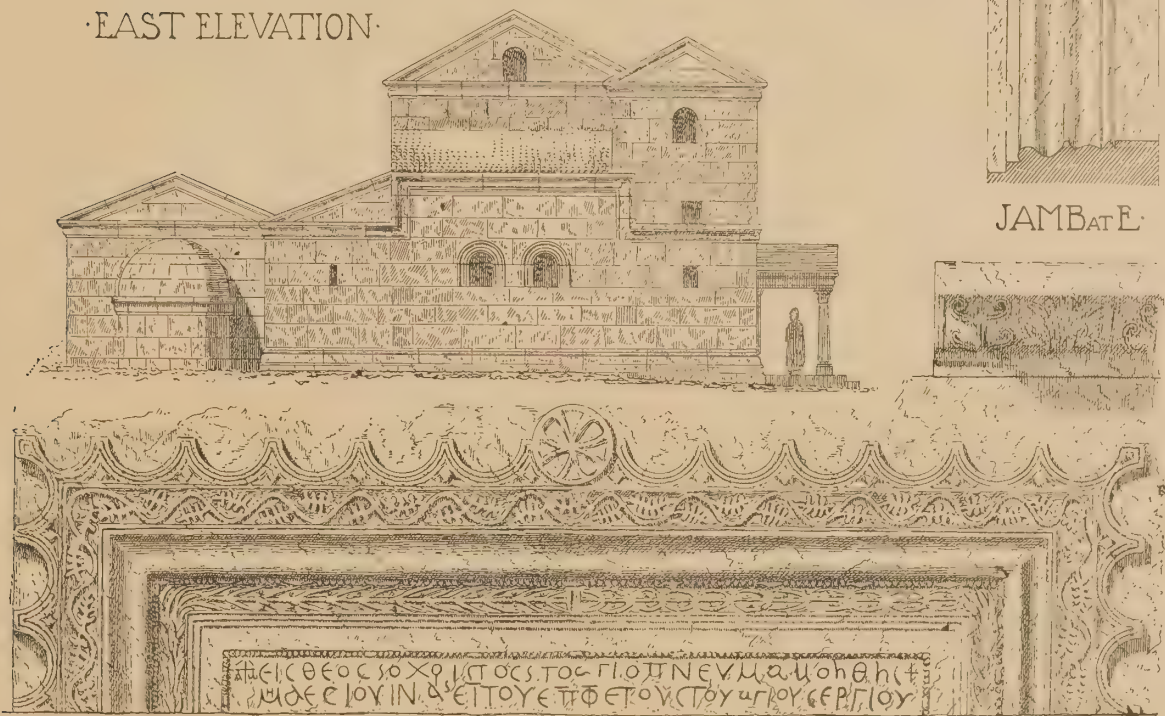
²²⁵ A. II, p. 212. P. II, p. 187.

²²⁷ P. II, B. p. 240. Ill. 242.

²²⁹ S. C. Pl. 121. A. II, p. 216.

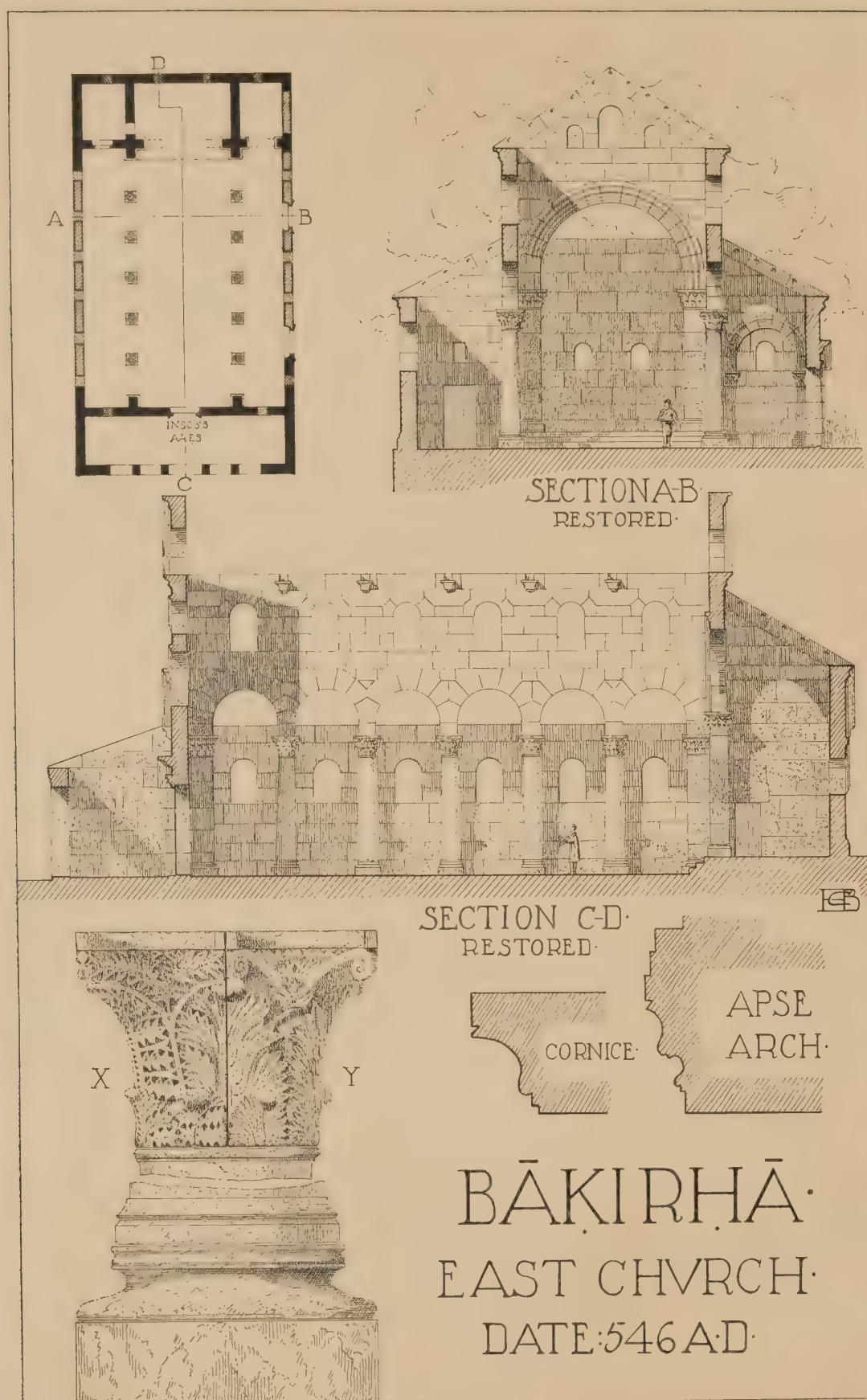


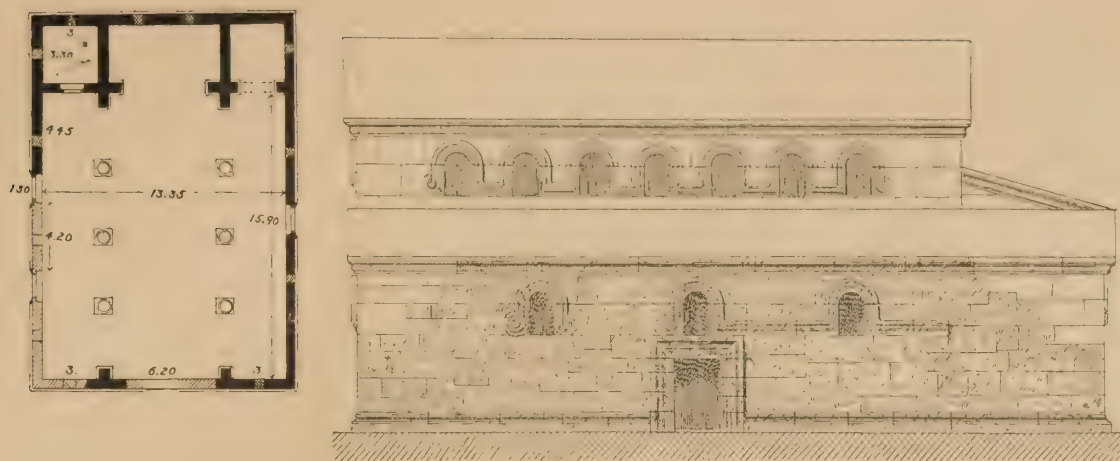
EAST ELEVATION.



CHVRCH OF ST. SERGIUS. DÂR KÎTÂ. DATES: 537 & 567 A.D.

III. 142.





Ill. 147. *Khirbit Tēzîn. Church, plan and elevation. Date: 585 A.D.*

the plates of *La Syrie Centrale* illustrates a lintel from this church which is one of the most beautiful in Northern Syria. The door-cap presents a narrow band of laurel below an ovolo richly carved with a rinceau of acanthus, capped by a tall cavetto adorned with erect acanthus leaves. At the ends are consoles with acanthus leaves carved upon their faces in very Classic manner. The sculpture is all thoroughly plastic in technique. The window mouldings are continued as string courses. The east end was roofed in the usual manner.

*Ksêdjbeh. West Church.*²³⁰

The smaller of the two churches at Ksêdjbeh, which we may call the West Church (Ill. 220), is the smallest of the group (Ill. 144). Its east end is of normal dimensions; but the nave is very short, almost square, and the four bays into which it is divided are so narrow that the old three-piece arch, which is in reality lintel construction, was resorted to. The portal in its south wall has a cavetto door-cap richly carved with erect acanthus leaves.

*Bākīrḥā. East Church.*²³¹ 546 A.D.

This church is one of the largest of the group, and one of the most interesting in its ruins, for its west façade is intact, and its east end is well preserved, save for the fallen chancel arch. The interior columns and arches, and the details of the clearstorey and side walls lie as they fell centuries ago. The nave has six bays (Ill. 145), the east end conforms to type, and the west end has a porch of four monolithic piers between returned end walls. The interior ornament consisted of the mouldings of the chancel arch and the arch of the prothesis, which was of horseshoe form, and of the rich foliate caps of the pilaster piers

and the capitals of the columns. These last are of two varieties (Ill. 145, X, Y), one of which is wholly plastic, the other almost entirely colouristic in treatment though concave in form. The exterior decoration, as illustrated by the west façade (Ill. 146) is more than usually interesting. The west portal is a copy of the famous doorways of the architect Kyros, several of whose churches are in plain view from the lofty site of Bākīrḥā, unless it can be shown that the whole doorway was taken from an older church designed by Kyros himself. A string moulding is carried across the wall and over the windows at the ends of the aisles. The caps of the piers of the porch are mouldings executed only on the face of the pier. The architrave mouldings are returned downward at their ends and terminate in loops. The mouldings of the three large windows above the portal are draped in curves between the openings, as are also those of the three small windows in the pediment. A single window on the clearstorey level has heavy mouldings which end in loops on either side. The windows at the east end were given exceedingly rich ornament in the form of heavy, continuous mouldings which have cusping above them.

*Khirbit Tēzîn.*²³² 585 A.D.

The church at this place is one of the latest in Northern Syria, and it was one of the smaller buildings of its class (Ill. 147); but it serves well to show that architecture was not on the decline either in style or in technique, as the unforeseen end of Christian civilization in Syria approached. Its plan differs from that of the foregoing churches only in having more and larger windows in the ground storey, the walls of which are preserved on all four sides. The apse arch, which is partly preserved and shows the horseshoe

²³⁰ A. II, p. 218. P. II, B, p. 160.

²³¹ A. II, pp. 209—212. P. II, B, p. 198.

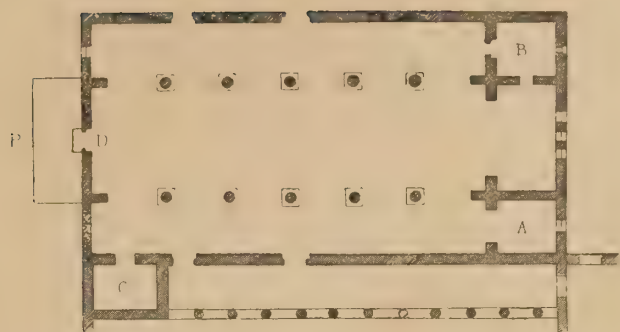
²³² A. II, p. 214. P. II, B, 204.



Ill. 146. Bākirhā. East Church, façade from the West.



Ill. 148. Behyö. Church, exterior from the East.

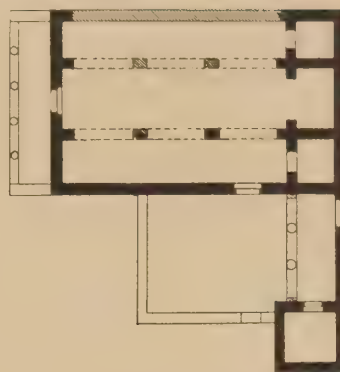


Ill. 149. *Behyō. Church, plan (after de Vogüé).*

form, is richly moulded, as are the caps of the piers which support it, and those of the responds at the ends of the nave arcades. The capitals of the columns are of a well balanced Corinthian type with plain leaves. The doorways are all three of them provided with deep mouldings which curl up in loops at the ends of the threshold, and each is surmounted with a heavy ovolo door-cap carved with rich and graceful rinceaux of acanthus executed in a most perfectly plastic manner (Ill. 237-A). Deep string mouldings of delicate profile are employed also as window mouldings by returning them beside the openings, and carrying them up the sides and over the round tops. (Ill. 233) The same mouldings are run up beside the frame mouldings of the portals, and over the relieving arches. Occasionally they fail to follow the expected course, and extend aimlessly along the wall surface, turning one or more angles until an opening is reached. The period was one of exuberance in the use of ornament, and the individual architect appears to have been bound by no set rules for the application of decorative features.

Bābīškā, St. Sergios; ²³³ 610 A.D.

This church must be the latest of its class, for it is the latest dated church in Northern Syria, and one of the latest of all the dated buildings in Syria, North or South. The building is not large, and the plan is typical of the class. It is in a sadly ruined condition, only the lower storey of the east wall, and parts of the east end being in place. The nave has only four bays. The diaconicon was spanned by a transverse arch. Little of the ornament remains; but the cap of one of the chancel piers is a good example of plain foliate design, and the arch itself was moulded. On the exterior we miss the door-cap which gives richness to most of the doorways of these churches. In its place we find the outer members of the frame mouldings broken out around an ornamental disc in the middle of the lintel.



Ill. 150. *Bettir. Church, plan.*

Behyō. ²³⁴

This is one of the churches published by M. de Vogüé. It is one of the small number situated in the Djebel il-A'la. The west wall is preserved to the height of one storey, but the east end is almost intact, and this is especially important, since it is the only preserved example of the type in which the main gable roof of the nave is carried back to form the roof of the rectangular sanctuary (Ill. 148). The building is a comparatively large one, its nave and sanctuary having the same length as the East Church at Baḳirhā including its prothesis. There were six wide arches on either side of the nave (Ill. 149); there was a tower at the southwest angle of the nave, and a porch of eleven columns extending eastward from the tower along the south aisle wall. The western portal was surmounted by a tall, trapezoidal door-cap adorned with fine carving of ornamental patterns. The cornice of the aisle walls was carried across the east end, being raised by two mitred elbows across the sanctuary. There are three windows with incised mouldings in the sanctuary in the first storey, and four, also framed in continuous incised mouldings, on the clear-storey level, and two in the gable end, separated by an Ionic colonnette in relief, and surmounted by a circular opening. At Khurēbāt ²³⁵ and Kefr Ḥauwār ²³⁶ are two smaller churches, in a much more ruined condition, that appear to have belonged to this same type and class.

CLASS 3

Basilicas with Piers and Broad Arches.

Bettir ²³⁷ and *Bashmishli* ²³⁸.

In taking up the class of churches which is characterized by the substitution of piers carrying broad arches for columns supporting narrow arches, we may continue with those examples of the class which have also the main characteristic of the former class, namely

²³³ A. II, p. 216. P. II, B. p. 169.

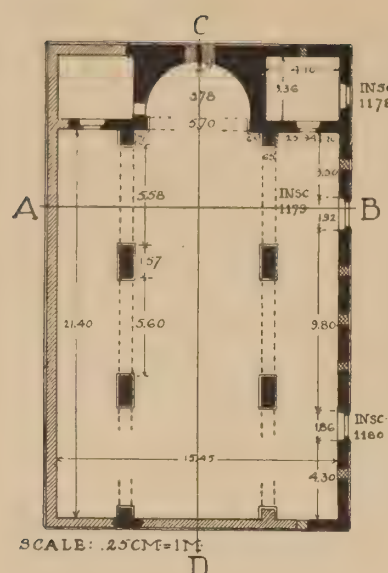
²³⁶ P. II, B. p. 231, Ill. 233.

²³⁴ S. C. Pls. 137, 138. A. II, p. 204.

²³⁷ A. II, p. 230.

²³⁵ A. II, p. 214.

²³⁸ A. II, p. 231, Fig. 93.



Ill. 151. Brâd. North Church, plan.
Date: 561 A.D.

the rectangular sanctuary between square side chambers. The little church at Bettir stands on the edge of the steep cliff that marks the eastern boundary of the Djebel il-A'la. The place is not over an hour's journey from Kalb Lauzeh, and the little church was unquestionably influenced by its great neighbour. The nave has three bays. In front of the west portal was a distyle porch, — not a colonnade of four columns as the plan (Ill. 150) shows. Directly south of the east end of the church, and about six metres distant, is a small, plain baptistery connected with the church by a wall. The south doorway of the church is framed in heavy mouldings and is crowned by a trapezoidal plate carved with flat, Oriental designs. The columns of the distyle porch at the west end had spiral flutings, and are the only examples of this particular feature that have been discovered in the exterior ornament of Syrian churches. The caps of the interior piers are excellent examples of plain foliage arranged in two rows in the Corinthian manner.

The church of Bashmishli is a little larger, but its plan is identical. Its east end is quite well preserved, showing a moulded chancel arch with cusping, and pier caps of foliate design treated in a manner rather colouristic. The caps of the adjoining responds, which are set one course lower, are more plastic and have plain, uncut leaves; the caps of the main piers of the nave are of the same variety. The three windows in the east end, — one in the sanctuary and one in each of the side chambers, — have mouldings which are looped in scrolls on either side.

*Brâd. North Church.*²³⁹ 561 A.D.

This church is situated in the extreme northern end of the Djebel Sim'ân. It is in a better state of preservation than any of the churches of this class, which belong to the sixth century. Two of the original three broad arches are preserved on both sides of the nave with the clearstorey above them (Ill. 197-B), the south wall is almost intact, the apse preserves the lower courses of its half dome, and the prothesis is standing in two storeys; only the north wall, the two western arches of the nave, and the west front have been destroyed. The church was much larger than most buildings of its class. The diaconicon was directly connected with the apse, the prothesis was reached from the south aisle by a doorway, and had another doorway opening out-of-doors (Ill. 151). The apse and side chambers were covered by a long lean-to at right angles to the roof of the nave. There were two coupled windows in the apse with a slender pier between them, which bears a twisted Ionic half column on its outer face. The interior ornament was confined to the moulded pier caps and a deep string moulding at the clearstorey level. The clearstorey windows are large and rather widely spaced; their mouldings are incised, and are carried in broad curves, like swags, from window to window. The mouldings of the south aisle portals are of a simple but good design, and the windows between them have incised mouldings which are not continuous. The inscription which gives the date is on the lintel of the outside doorway of the prothesis.

*Djūwānīyeh. Church of St. Stephen.*²⁴⁰ 554 A.D.

This ruined town situated in the southern end of the Djebel Bārīshā abounds in interesting buildings of several centuries. Its church is believed to have been dedicated in honor of Saint Stephen on account of an inscription upon a stele, found in the atrium on the south side of the church, which reads: *Limits of the asylum of the Holy First Martyr Stephanos, by the grace of our most serene King Flavios Iustinianos, Semper Augustus, under our most holy and most blessed archbishop and patriarch Domninos.*²⁴¹ Another inscription on a corresponding landmark a mile and a half to the eastward, gives the date 554. The two were almost certainly of the same period. The church was not later than these inscriptions. The building is a little smaller than the North Church of Brâd, but its plan is almost identical (Ill. 192-K). It is less well preserved, not one of its arches being in place, but its west end preserves two storeys, and the apse wall

²³⁹ P. II, B. III, 340.

²⁴⁰ A. II, p. 229, Fig. 91.

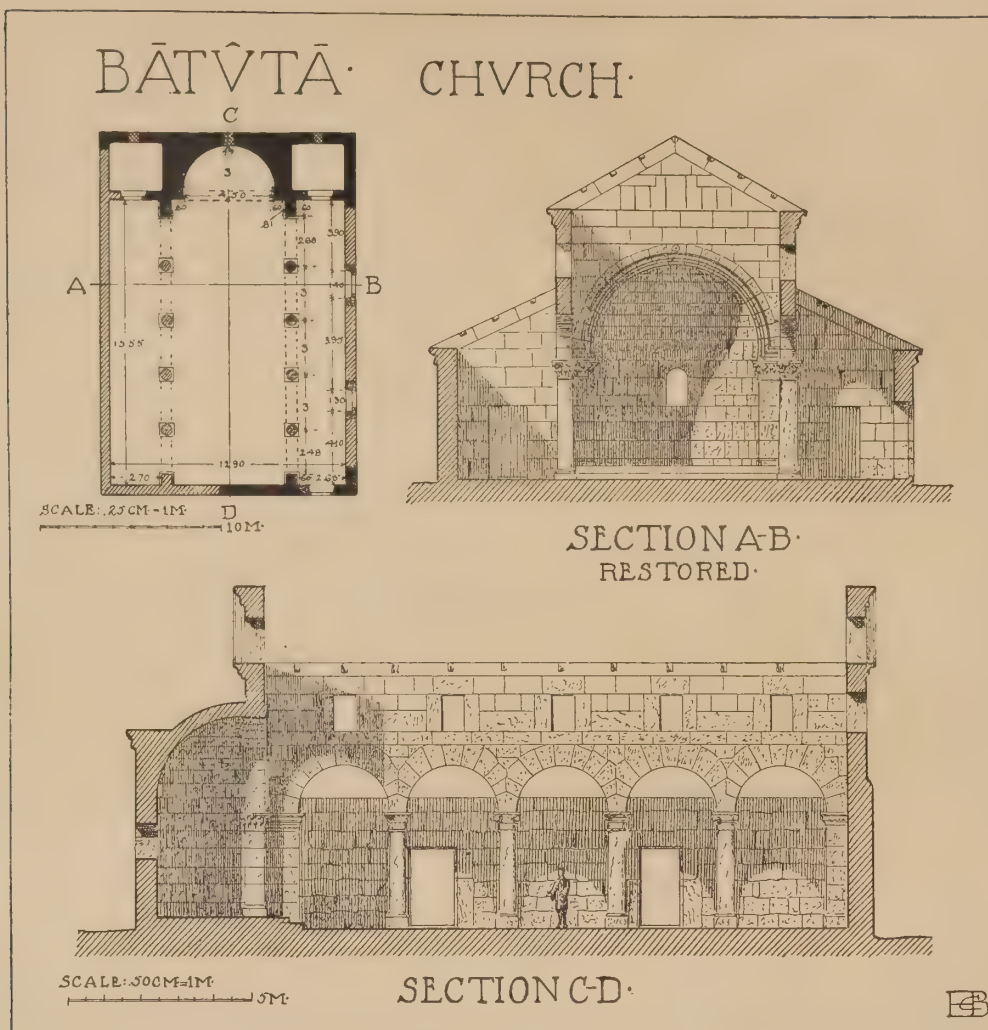
²⁴¹ A. II, insc. 29.



Ill. 152. Djūwānīyeh. Church, façade from the West. Date: 554 A.D.



Ill. 154. Shêkh Slēmân. Church, interior looking East. Date: 602 A.D.



Ill. 153.

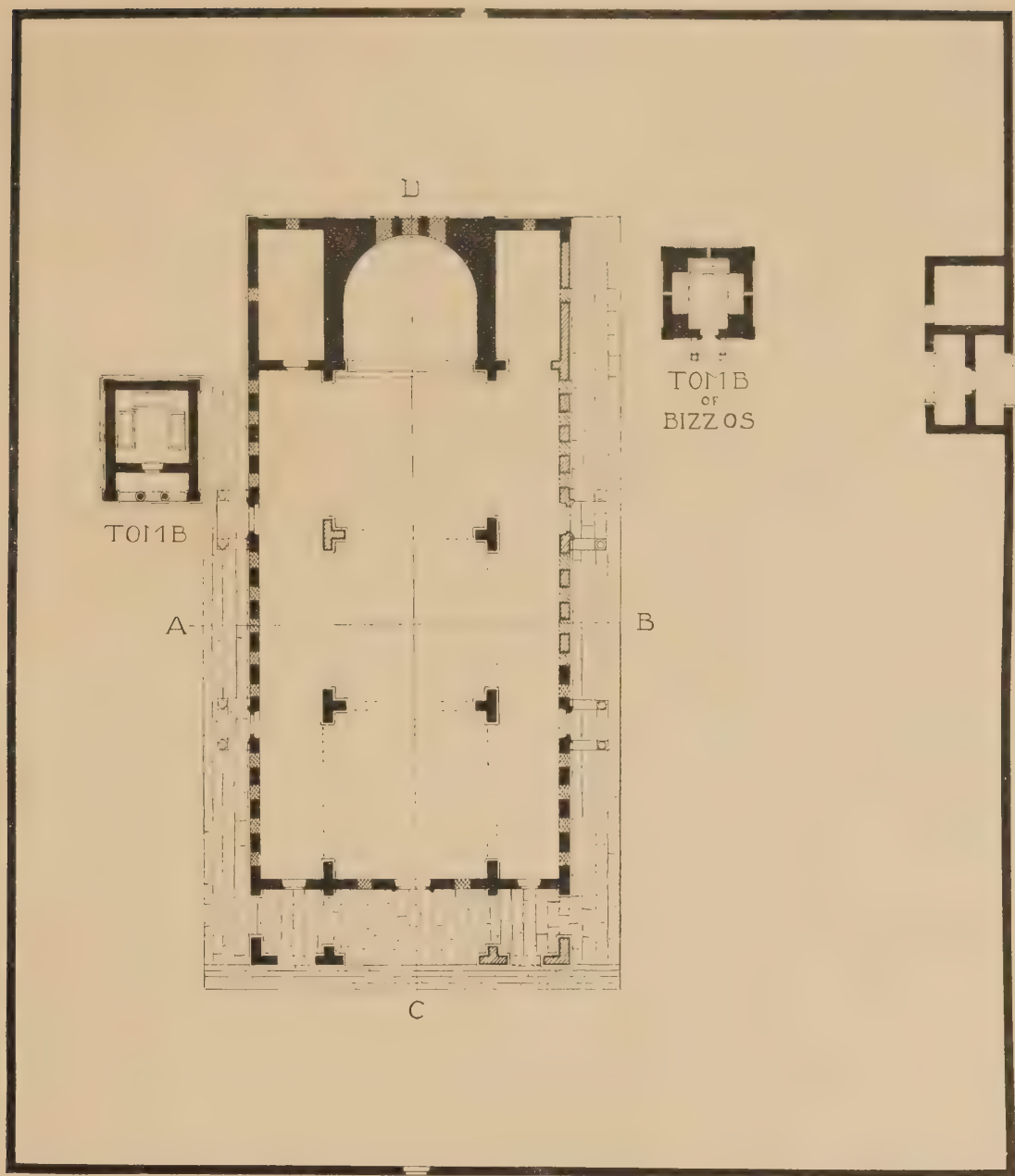
is standing, together with its piers and the adjoining responds. The caps of the piers throughout the church are of handsome foliate designs in plastic technique. The apse arch was moulded and much stilted. A heavy ovolo, quite plain, marked the springing of the half dome. The west façade (Ill. 152) is ornamented with mouldings both incised and in relief. The latter, which are string courses, are extremely salient and heavy. The incised mouldings are employed for window decoration; they are sometimes carried along above the heavy string courses, but more frequently are broken out and extended on either side of the windowsill for a short distance and then returned downward against the string course. Some of the heavier mouldings are ornamented with carved discs in relief. The effect of the façade as a whole is rather heavy,

Shêkh Slēmân.²⁴² 602 A.D.

A rather different example of this class is the later and smaller of the two churches on the southern con-

finies of the great ruin of Shêkh Slēmân. Piers are used here in place of columns, but the arches which they support are proportioned much as if they were carried on columns. There are four bays in a church only 15.50 m. long. The piers, moreover, are high and composed of two slender, oblong blocks. They have moulded bases and caps. In other respects the plan is normal (Ill. 153) having a semicircular apse between square side chambers, and a straight east wall. The entire apse is preserved (Ill. 154), and all of the arches but one. The outer walls are standing and only the clearstorey is wanting. The interior ornament is confined to the mouldings of the piers. The exterior is unusually plain. The mouldings of the doorways are incised, but terminate in scrolls beside the threshold. In place of door-caps, ornamental discs were employed. These are not symmetrically arranged, and break into the mouldings of the lintels. This is one of the latest of the churches of Northern Syria, its date being given as 602 A.D.

²⁴² P. II, B. p. 337, Ills. 384—386.



Ill. 155. *Ruwêhā. Bizzos Church, plan.*

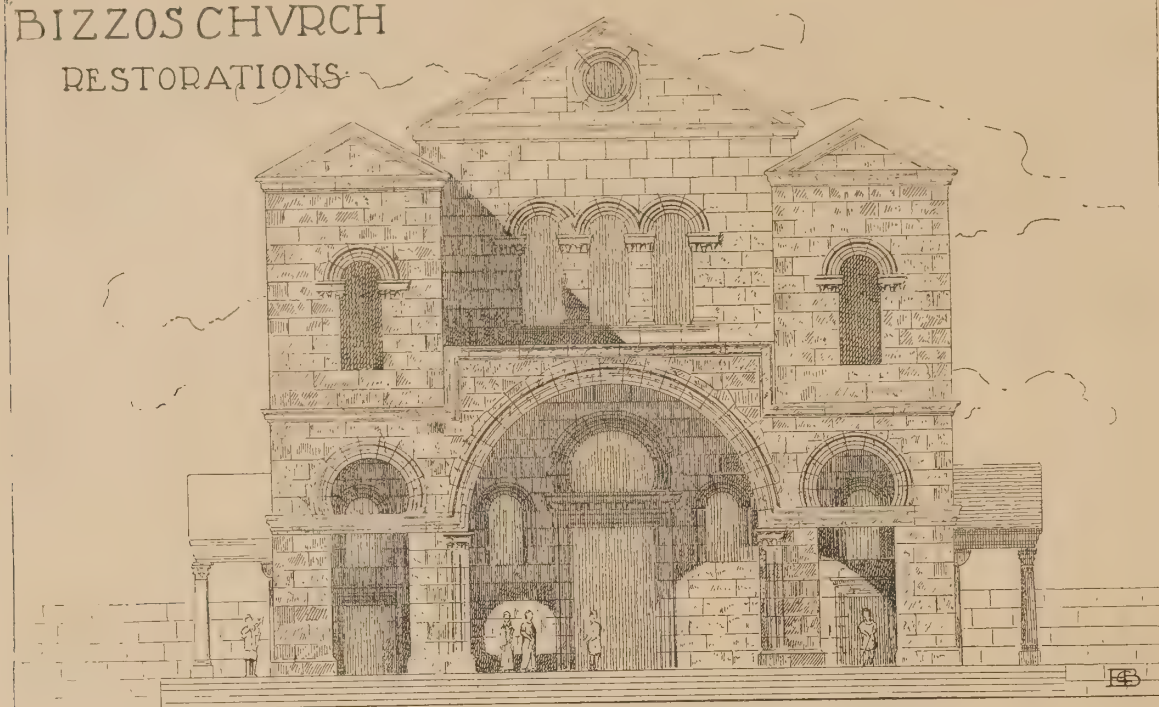
*Ruwêhā. Bizzos Church.*²⁴³

This is the largest church in the Djebel Rîhā; it is second only to the "Cathedral" of Brâd, and third in size to the "Cathedral" of Kerrâtîn which is the largest of the Syrian churches known. It is one of the few sixth century churches in this particular mountain district, and one of the most important in all Syria, because it is one of the Northern churches which introduced the system of high transverse arches in the nave. It was first published by M. de Vogüé. The apse is very deeply set (Ill. 155), so that its curve could be drawn to a complete circle within the chancel arch; the side chambers are long and narrow.

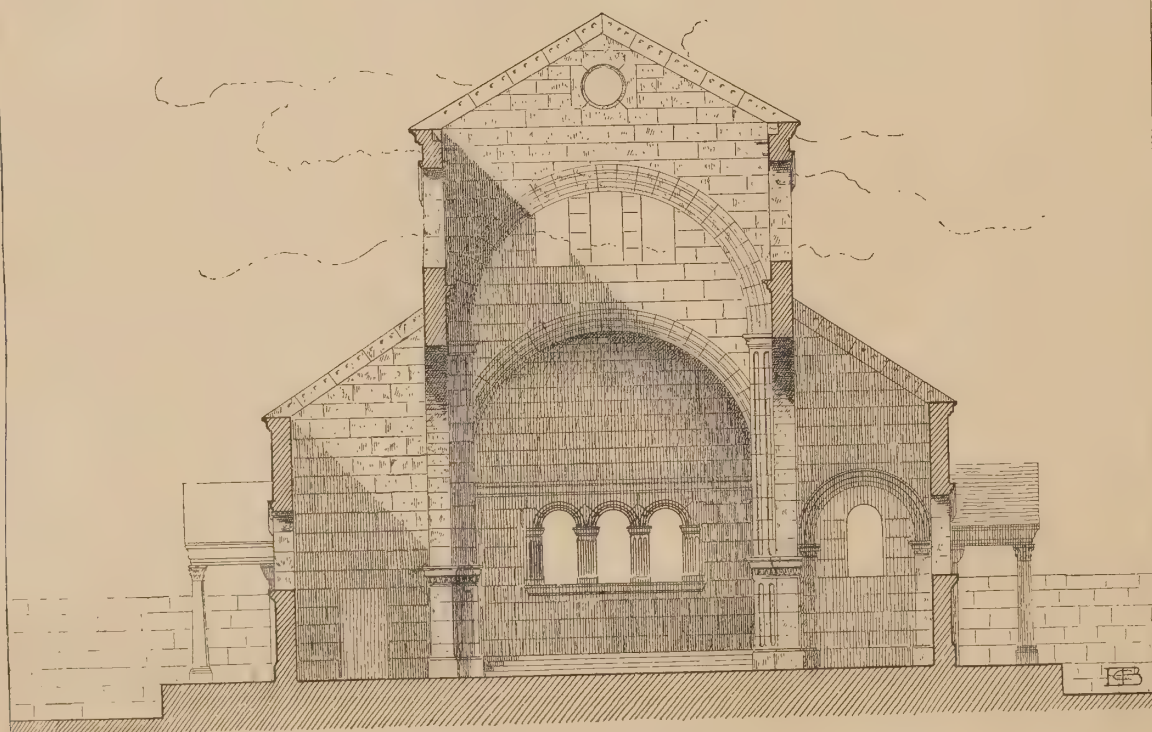
The east wall is straight, but there are three windows in the apse. The nave is divided into three bays equal in span to the width of the main aisle. The piers are T form in plan with the foot of the T directed toward the middle aisle, to carry a tall rectangular shaft, set against the spandril of the arches up to the clearstorey level where transverse arches were thrown across the main aisle (Ill. 156). Gables, pierced with round openings and equal to the main east and west gables in height, were erected upon the transverse arches. The clearstorey walls were pierced with four windows in each bay between the transverse arches. The apse arch rose only to the clearstorey

²⁴³ S. C. Pls. 68, 69. A. II, pp. 225—228. P. II, B. pp. 145—148.

RVWÊHĀ
BIZZOS CHVRCH
RESTORATIONS



WEST FAÇADE.



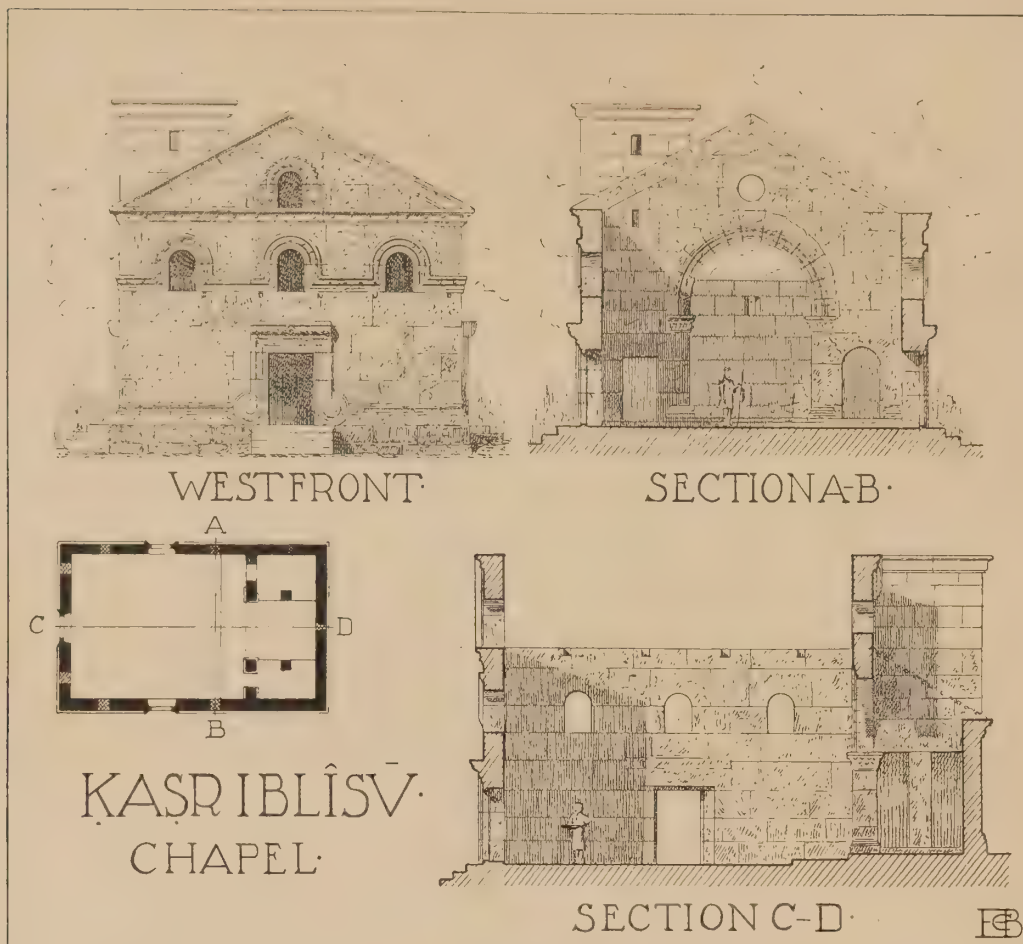
SECTION A-B.



Ill. 157. *Burdj id-Dērūnī. Chapel, Plan and elevations.*

level, so that there may have been windows above it like those of the bays of the clearstorey. The side aisles had each two portals with tall, relieving arches above them, and thirteen large windows. The plan of the narthex is not unlike that of Saint Simeon's church at Ǧal'at Sim'ān, except that there were no exterior buttresses. The central arch was wide and high, the arches at the sides of the narthex were narrow and of horseshoe form. In place of the gables which we have seen above the arches of the narthex at Saint Simeon's, we find there was a flat roof over the middle arch, and towerlike tribunes above the side arches. The ornament of the interior was quite abundant, though very reserved. All the arches have face mouldings and a string moulding is carried around the church at the clearstorey level. The caps of the apse piers are of a foliate Corinthian type, while those of the piers of the nave arches are composed of heavy mouldings carried upon little brackets. The faces of the piers and of the ascending shafts which support the transverse arches are fluted to resemble Classical pilasters. The three windows of the apse have semicircular mouldings carried upon stout, fluted pilasters. The exterior ornament is quite as reserved, the mouldings are nowhere so heavy as those of the churches in the other groups of these Northern mountains generally are, and the whole effect shows a leaning toward Classical ideals. There is a simple base moulding, a light, moulded string course at the level of the windowsills, and another light moulding which is carried over the arches of the windows and along the wall from window to window at the arch level. There were

tall, fluted pilasters with Corinthian caps at the angles of the building, and short ones, without caps, between the base moulding and the string course, to mark the division between the apse and the side chambers. The mouldings of the apse windows were carried upon stout, fluted pilasters on the exterior as well as in the interior. The doorways show a diversity of treatment. The great west portal has simple frame mouldings crowned by a rich Classical cornice supported by modillions with acanthus leaves in their soffits. The horseshoe shaped relieving arch above the portal is adorned with rich face mouldings which are quite Palmyrene in their composition. The side portals, by way of diversity, have heavy ovolo door-caps carved with rinceaux colouristically executed, above their frame mouldings. The high, middle arch of the narthex lies on the ground in front of the church. It was enriched with a deep face moulding, and sprang from fluted pilasters with foliate caps. The openings on either side, one of which is partly preserved, had moulded architraves, like tiebeams, drawn straight across them below moulded horseshoe arches. These must have been inserted for greater security. There are remains of the distyle porches of the side portals which show that these had monolithic gables with arches cut up into them, like the gables set above the arcuated entablatures of certain Syrian temples of the Classical period. This church was set in the middle of a large, walled peribolos, and was flanked by a monumental tomb on either side, as is described in a later chapter of this book. The structure should be studied in connexion with two other churches which



III. 158.

are described later in this chapter, — the church at iṭ-Ṭūbā and that at Reṣāfah, both in Northeastern Syria.

CLASS 4

Chapels with undivided Naves

The smaller chapels, and those of the simplest plan, are, by no means necessarily the plainest in point of ornament: the little chapel of Burdj id-Dērūnī,²⁴⁴ standing quite alone on the slope below Bākīrḥā, is a proof of this statement. It is a simple rectangle with a doorway and a row of five windows high up on either side, a row of three low windows and two windows high up in both ends, and gables pierced with a single window each. The doorways are richly moulded (III. 157) and a deep string moulding on the sill level of the high windows is carried up the sides and over the rounded tops of the openings all the way around the building. The three low windows at the ends are framed in mouldings which are curved between the openings and terminated in scrolls at the ends of the rows. The pediments are provided with heavy cornices and pierced with windows framed in mouldings. The chapel at Kfellūsīn²⁴⁵ is somewhat

larger, and more oblong in shape. It has two portals in the north wall and one in the south. A narrow space is divided off at the east end by a transverse arch. After the completion of the original building a small chamber was added to the north side at the east end, and a doorway was broken through the wall into this improvised side chamber. The doorways have rich frame mouldings which terminate in spirals. One of them is capped with a high cavetto carved with erect acanthus leaves, and is surmounted by a moulded segmental relieving arch. A high string moulding was carried around the entire building, and above this are rows of windows, eight on a side, with heavy relief mouldings which are carried over the round topped openings, and draped in curves between them to terminate in spirals at the end of the row.

To the northwest of Kaṣr Iblîsū²⁴⁶ there stands a chapel in an almost perfect state of preservation. This is also a simple rectangular building, but a space at the east end is divided off from the rest of the building by a tall arch with low, narrow openings on either side of it (III. 158). Behind the piers which carry the arch are rectangular monolithic piers, between

²⁴⁴ A. II, pp. 235. P. II, B. p. 201.

²⁴⁵ P. II, B. p. 223, III. 225, 226.

²⁴⁶ A. II, p. 23, P. II, B. p. 207.

the arch piers and the east wall, which carry architraves and form a sort of division between the sanctuary and the side chambers. The eastern gable of the building was set above the chancel arch. The north side chamber was built up in an extra storey, like a low tower; the sanctuary and the other side chamber being covered with a low lean-to. The ornament of the interior is confined to the mouldings of the chancel arch which are incised, and the plastic, but rather crude, foliate caps of the piers. The exterior, however, is richly decorated. The portals have frame mouldings with spiral terminations, and carved ovole door-caps. A handsome base moulding is carried around the entire building. A deep string moulding, set at a high level, is carried over the windows, of which there are three on each side and three at the end. A round topped window in the western pediment has frame mouldings which end in large spirals, the east gable was provided with a circular opening. The coved members of the string mouldings and the straight cornice, have round ornaments, like a plain ball-flower, carved in them as an added enrichment.

The ground plan of the chapels at Kefr Nabō²⁴⁷ and Kharāb Shems²⁴⁸ is a little more elaborate in that a semicircular apse appears at the east end. The former is dated by a Syriac inscription of the year 525, and is described as a *martyrion*. It is very plain, having no mouldings except its cornice. The doorways have simple lintel decoration in the form of discs of more or less intricate designs. The latter is almost equally plain outside and inside, but the piers which carry the apse are grooved like pilasters. Beside the old fourth century church at Simkhār is a sixth century chapel²⁴⁹ of the same plan as the two foregoing but extravagantly rich in ornamental details (*Ill.* 27, 28.) This small building is provided with a deep base moulding, for its doorway, a rich string course, continuous window mouldings above the string course, salient cornices and an incised moulding around the circular window in its pediment. Some of the mouldings of the doorway are carved with patterns, and the outer fascia is enriched with cusping. The continuous window moulding is also cusped, and the rich set of mouldings which adorns the apse arch was given the same enrichment. The whole building is as elaborately decorated as was possible within the limits of the Christian ornament of the period, and gives an effect which suggests the richest period of Gothic decoration. A chapel at Bābūdā,²⁵⁰ published by M. de Vogüé, has

the same general plan but is embellished with the addition of a beautiful two-storey narthex which consists of three arches carried on piers on the ground storey, with a broad single arched loggia above it, and a pediment above all.

Another type of plan is illustrated in a lone-standing chapel, called Sitt ir-Rûm²⁵¹ ("The Lady of the Greeks"), not far to the south of Dêr Sim'ân. Here the oblong nave terminated toward the east in an arch considerably narrower than the east wall, and a small rectangular sanctuary with a lean-to roof is added. This chapel is without ornamental details. There are three chapels of this plan in the Djebel Sim'ân all of which are richly decorated, one at Kefr Lâb,²⁵² one at Burdjkeh,²⁵³ and one at Burdj Hêdar.²⁵⁴ The doorways of all three have frame mouldings that terminate in spirals, and all have rich string mouldings which serve also as window frames; those of Kefr Lâb are run at half the height of the window, and returned in angles, those of Burdjkeh, a little above the sill, in curves and angles, and those of Burdj Hêdar, at the sill level in the usual manner, and in angles only (*Ill.* 159). These mouldings in all three chapels terminate in spirals at the ends of the rows of windows. The chapel at Burdj Hêdar has a bema which is elevated upon three steps (*Ill.* 214), and a richly moulded and carved chancel arch. Its little sanctuary is covered by a roof of stone slabs which slope upward from the east wall to a moulding above the arch. The threefold division of the east end in these chapels with undivided naves is found in six examples. The large undivided chapel at Brād²⁵⁵ is wide enough to permit a square sanctuary between side chambers without projection to the north or south. A long colonnade extended along the south wall. Its row of high windows was adorned with incised mouldings which were looped between the openings. The portal mouldings were also incised, and were broken in a horseshoe curve around a large ornamental disc in the middle of the lintel (*Ill.* 236). The incised mouldings of the single west window were twisted in spirals in their course over the arch in a most playful and engaging manner, as is to be seen in an illustration in the second part of this book (*Ill.* 235). The chapel at Batûtā²⁵⁶ has the same plan, but it is almost without ornament, save in a little distyle porch before its south portal, — the only one still standing in all Syria out of the hundreds that once existed. This charming detail is also illustrated in later pages (*Ill.* 204). There is a chapel of fair size, but in complete

²⁴⁷ P. II, B. p. 295, *Ill.* 324.

²⁵⁰ S. C. Pl. 67.

²⁵³ P. II, B. p. 329, *Ills.* 372, 373.

²⁵⁶ P. II, B. p. 330, *Ills.* 376, 377.

²⁴⁸ P. II, B. *Ill.* 362.

²⁵¹ P. II, B. p. 258, *Ills.* 276, 277.

²⁵⁴ P. II, B. p. 290, *Ills.* 315—317.

²⁴⁹ P. II, B. p. 335, *Ills.* 382, 383.

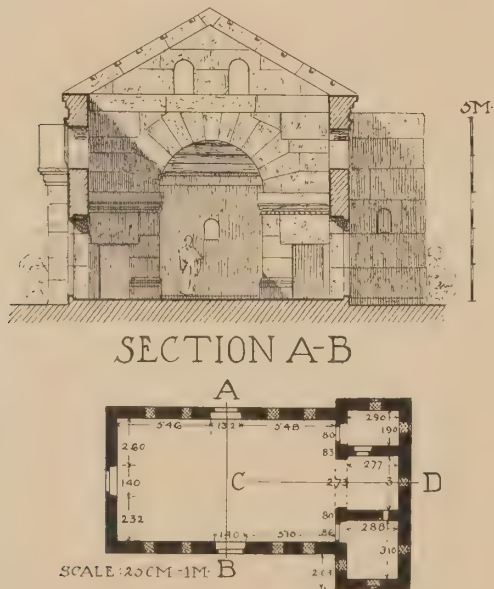
²⁵² P. II, B. p. 287, *Ill.* 310.

²⁵⁵ P. II, B. p. 311, *Ills.* 342, 343.



Ill. 159. *Burdj Hêdar. Chapel, exterior from the Southwest.*

ruins, at Zerzîta, with a rectangular sanctuary and side chambers. In my first publication²⁵⁷ of this building, I made the mistake of restoring the cross section as that of a church with a three-aisled nave.



Ill. 160. *Surkanyā. Chapel, plan and section.*

On the south side of the ruins of Surkanyā²⁵⁸ stands a little chapel (Ill. 160), complete but for the roof of its nave. Here the building is small and the nave so narrow that the side chambers were obliged to project, the north chamber only by the thickness of its wall, the other by over two metres. The east end of the nave is just wide enough to accommodate the arch of the square sanctuary and the entrances to the side chambers. The sanctuary is roofed with closely fitted slabs of stone laid lengthwise upon the sloping side-walls of the chamber. The prothesis was carried up in a low towerlike structure. The exterior cornices are all heavy and salient, but the other mouldings are all incised. The continuous window mouldings are carried from opening to opening in angles and curves, and, in one place, in a double curve (Ill. 190).

The plan of the chapel of the Southwest Monastery²⁵⁹ at Dêr Simcân is given in an earlier chapter (Ill. 108). It is one of the larger churches of this type. It is described on page 107. At Kharâb il-Meshhed²⁶⁰ there is a little chapel of this same plan, that was converted into a mosque in the later Middle Ages.

²⁵⁷ P. II, B. p. 246, Ill. 250.
²⁵⁸ P. II, B. p. 267, Ills. 283–285. The “Southwest Monastery” and the “South Monastery” are the same.
²⁶⁰ P. II, p. 333, Ill. 379.

²⁵⁹ P. II, B. p. 326, Ills. 367–369.

Kefr Finsheh, Chapel.

On the south side of a small ruined town called Kefr Finsheh ²⁶¹ in the Djebel Bārīsha, stands a chapel, the plan of which finds no parallel among all the churches and chapels of Syria. The rectangular nave is divided at the east end by an arch between two rectangular openings (*Ill.* 161). On either side, at the east end, are projecting side chambers not connected with the sanctuary, and deeper than the sanctuary. Westward from these side chambers extend columnar porticoes which are returned at angle piers and carried across the west end of the chapel. There are temples of the Roman period which have a plan not unlike this, with the differences that the projecting wings are smaller in proportion and the peristyle turns upon columns instead of L-shaped piers. Above the ground plan the likeness to a Pagan temple ceases, for the walls of the nave and sanctuary are carried up a storey higher than the columns which are comparatively low, and are provided with windows, like those of a clearstorey, which open out over the sloping roofs of the porticoes. These roofs were continued to the east to cover the projecting side chambers. The capitals of the columns of the porticoes are beautiful examples of the Corinthian order in Christian hands, the piers have moulded bases and caps, and the architraves are richly moulded. Above the slanting roofs of the porticoes, the windows of the chapel were framed in continuous mouldings which terminated in scrolls. Beside the terminal scroll at the east end on the south side is a dovetail plate in relief with an inscription calling for the blessings of Saint Mary and Saint Domitios. The chapel was probably dedicated to one or both of these Saints, and was perhaps a memorial building; for there is a recess, low down in one of the walls of the sanctuary, which may have contained the body of some person commemorated.

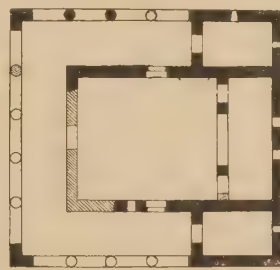
Midjleyyā, Chapel.

The half octagonal chapel at Midjleyyā, ²⁶² published by M. de Vogüé, is one of a very small number of ecclesiastical buildings in the Djebel Rihā which displays the heavy string mouldings and window mouldings that characterize most of the sixth century churches in the other mountain groups of Northern Syria. Its plan is unique (*Ill.* 195-U), presenting four sides of an octagon with corresponding interior columns, joined onto a semicircular apse flanked by side chambers and concealed by a flat east wall, or, one might say that three sides of the octagon toward the east had been replaced by the east end of an ordinary basilica

equal in width to the diameter of the octagon. The apse was preceded by a short space covered by a tunnel vault. This had doors opening upon both side chambers. The side chambers were two storeys high and the whole east end was covered by a lean-to roof. I can not entirely subscribe to M. de Vogüé's restoration of the nave of this building. Three sides of the interior octagon are occupied by single arches, the north and south sides are prolonged to join the east end, and are divided into two arches each. These arches are very narrow and were composed of arcuated lintels. M. de Vogüé shows them as segmental in form, but he failed to see the blocks which made them semicircular and even stilted, so that they were equal in height to the other wider arches. M. de Vogüé believed that the central octagon was open to the sky and that there was only a low wall above the arches. It is quite certain, from fragments lying in the interior, that the interior octagon was carried up in a clearstorey and was roofed in wood, having a tentlike roof above three sides of the octagon, with the other sides and the peak prolonged to meet the wall above the apse and side chambers. The exterior is ornamented with a salient string moulding which is carried around the building at the level of the windowsills (*Ill.* 162). The cornice of the nave walls is prolonged to form a string moulding around the rectangular part of the structure. All the windows are provided with heavy mouldings, almost as deep as the openings are wide. No spirals or loops appear.

Baptisteries

There are three types of baptisteries among the ruins of Northern Syria; one, a small, square building with a low pyramidal roof, another, of the same general plan, but having a little apse toward the east, and a third, of central, polygonal form. Fourteen of these buildings are known in Northern Syria, and half of them are dated. Only two are dated earlier than the sixth century, the baptistery of Ksêdjbēh (p. 49) and Ẓaṣr Iblisū (p. 55) and they are both dated in the



Ill. 161. *Kefr Finsheh.*
Chapel, plan.

²⁶¹ *A.* II, p. 236.

²⁶² *S. C. Pl.* 63. *A.* II, p. 237.



Ill. 162. Midjleyyā. Chapel, exterior from the South.

first half of the fifth. It may be that some of the oblong chapels joined onto churches, like that at Simkhâr,²⁶³ were baptisteries. It was formerly supposed that baptisteries were connected only with the churches of bishops; but, in Northern Syria, there are baptisteries in three or four towns within a radius of five miles; and, in two cases, two in a single town. If there were any doubt as to these buildings being baptisteries, it would be dispelled by some of the inscriptions which describe them as such. It is not without interest to note that not a single building has been discovered in Southern Syria that can be identified as a baptistery and only one in Northeastern Syria, and this is not certainly one.

Fidreh. 513 A.D.

The simplest type appears in two forms, one entirely plain, the other much decorated. The baptistery of Fidreh,²⁶⁴ dated by a Syriac inscription of the year 513, is one of the square type. It stands about 12 m. to the southeast of the church, and is about 5 m. square. It has two entrances, one in the west wall, and one in the north, and two windows high up in all four sides. The baptistery at Bettir²⁶⁵ is even simpler, for it has but one entrance and one window. It stands about 6 m. to the south of the southeast angle of the church (*Ill.* 150) with which it is connected by a wall. The baptistery at Bāmuḡḡā²⁶⁶ joins the church at its southeast angle. It has a western doorway

with simply moulded jambs and lintel, two high windows in its east wall, and one in each of the other walls. A shallow niche was cut in the middle of the east wall, but the stones of which it was composed have fallen away.

Khirbit il-Khaṭīb. 532 A.D.

There is a baptistery of this simple type at Khirbit il-Khaṭīb²⁶⁷ standing about 5 m. to the southeast of the church. It is dated by a Syriac inscription of the year 532, while the church is dated 473. The east wall is thicker than the others, and contains a niche with a shallow basin in the bottom of it. The doorway is ornamented by a trapezoidal door-cap carved with decorated bands. The windows are small and single.

Bashmishli. 536 A.D.

The baptistery at Bashmishli,²⁶⁸ dated 536, by a Greek inscription, introduces the decorated type. It was found in the midst of the modern village, and is inhabited. The church to which it belonged has been either entirely destroyed, or is entirely hidden by modern buildings. This small, cubical structure is ornamented with a deep base moulding and a richly moulded cornice. The doorway is framed in exceptionally broad and intricately carved mouldings, consisting of narrow fillets alternating with bands of zig-zags, slender foliate rinceaux and interlaces, with heavy cusping

²⁶³ Cf. p. 149.

²⁶⁶ *A.* II, p. 208, *Ill.* 82.

²⁶⁴ *P.* II, B. p. 251, *Ill.* 260.

²⁶⁷ *A.* II, p. 201. *P.* II, B. p. 203, *Ill.* 207.

²⁶⁵ *A.* II, p. 231.

²⁶⁸ *A.* II, p. 239.



Ill. 163. Dêhes. Baptistry of East Church, exterior from the West.

outside of all, and a disc of lacelike carving in the middle of the lintel. The windows, one in each wall, as it appears, are framed in deeply incised mouldings.

Dêhes.

A somewhat larger, and still more richly ornamented baptistry is that near the southeast angle of the East Church at Dêhes,²⁶⁹ and bearing the famous Syriac inscription which names the building as a baptistry and gives the name of the architect as Yōhannān.²⁷⁰ This building has a base moulding and a moulded string course at a little above half its height, besides a fine cornice (*Ill.* 163). The portal is adorned with a broad set of good mouldings and a door-cap with flat decoration. The angles of the building are grooved to simulate pilasters. The windows, three in the east and three in the west wall, and only two in the other sides, have wide, incised mouldings.

Dêr Sêtā.

A fine example of a large, decorated baptistry²⁷¹ of square ground plan is that at the southeast angle of the great church at Dêr Sêtā. This building, like that at Bashmishli, was converted into a dwelling, probably in the later Middle Ages, when its west front and portal were changed and a flight of stairs was erected upon a pointed arch set against the east wall (*Ill.* 164). This building has a base moulding of almost Classical profile, and a heavy string moulding below half the height of the building, which gives the

effect of a temple podium and a salient cornice. The windows, which are three in the east wall and were probably three in the other walls also, are decorated with wide relief mouldings which were returned in angles at the sill level, and carried around the building directly above the string course.

Bākīrḥā.

In the southeast angle of the atrium on the south side of the West Church at Bākīrḥā²⁷² is a baptistry of square plan, which is perhaps the most richly decorated of them all (*Ill.* 137). Here we find a base moulding, a string moulding at a level above half the height of the walls, a salient cornice, fluted pilasters in relief, but without caps, at all the angles and both above and below the string course, two doorways with mouldings and door-caps, and windows, one in the east wall and another to the west, both framed in deep mouldings (*Ill.* 165). Some of the mouldings are enriched with ball ornaments, on bosses, in their coved members, others are broken by ornamental discs in relief. Beside the baptistry, on the south, is an arched entrance with a richly moulded and cusped archivolt.

Rbē'ah.

Beside the little church of Rbē'ah,²⁷³ in the Djebel Riḥā, standing just free from the southeast angle of the church, is a large, square baptistry (*Ill.* 81). This building is also divided horizontally by a string moulding

²⁶⁹ *A.* II, p. 206.

²⁷² *A.* II, p. 190. *P.* II, B. p. 195.

²⁷⁰ *A.* IV, insc. 8.

²⁷³ *A.* II, p. 239.

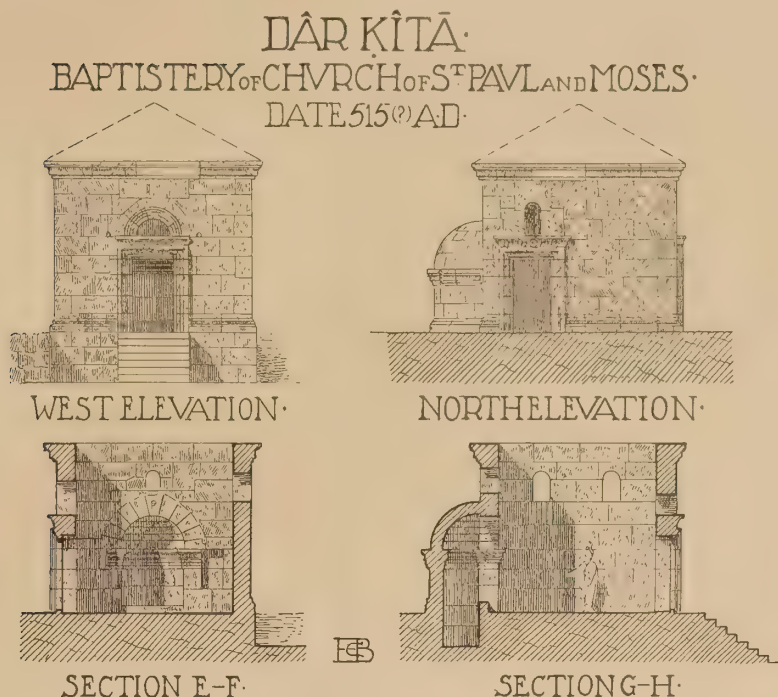
²⁷¹ *A.* II, p. 195.



Ill. 164. Dêr Sêtâ. Baptistery, exterior from the East.



Ill. 165. Bâkirhâ. Baptistery of West Church, exterior from the Northwest.



Ill. 166.

at a level about two-thirds the height of the walls. The doorway has good, deep frame mouldings. There are two windows in the east wall, and two to the south, all framed in incised mouldings.

Among the baptisteries that have apses, two which belong to the fifth century, have been mentioned above, that adjoining the East Church at Ksêdjbeh (p. 49) of 414 A.D., and that connected with the church at Kaşr Iblisū (p. 55), which is dated 431 A.D. We have observed that all the baptisteries thus far described occupy a position at the southeast angle of the church, most of them being in very close proximity.

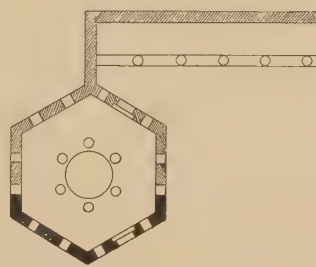
Dâr Kîta. 515 A.D.

The baptistery of the Church of Saint Paul and Moses at Dâr Kîta²⁷⁴ occupies a new position (Ill. 166), standing over 6 m. south of the west end of the church. The little building is excellently well preserved. It has a base moulding, a cornice, well framed portals, one in the west wall and one in the north side, and a moulding at the springing of the little half dome both outside and inside. The relieving arch above the west portal is moulded; but the windows are quite plain. An examination was made of the lower part of the apse, and a font was discovered. Behind a low parapet is a semicircular baptismal font of .93 m. radius, sunk 1.26 m. below the level of the floor of the baptistery. The font is lined with highly finished stonework throughout, and there is an outlet for water at a height of 1.20 m. The candidate for baptism

would have stood in water breast-deep, and would have been emersed only with great difficulty by the priest standing upon the floor of the baptistery. There is a little square niche beside the apse arch, which may have contained a basin for the actual rite of baptism. The inscription upon this building was originally deciphered to give the date 422; it is now believed to be 515. The other baptistery²⁷⁵ in this same town joins onto the church of Saint Sergios at its southeast angle (Ill. 142). It is smaller and simpler than the baptistery described above, and it is less well preserved. The baptistery was probably built at the same time as the church, in 537, for an inscription upon its doorway, dated in the year 567, mentions a renewal of the doorway in the reign of the Emperor Justin II, under the patriarch Anastasios.

Dêr Sêtâ.

There are only two baptisteries of central plan in Northern Syria, unless the half octagonal chapel at



Ill. 167. *Dêr Sêtâ.*
Baptistery, plan.

²⁷⁴ A. II, p. 138 f. P. II, B. p. 183 f.

²⁷⁵ A. II, p. 203. P. II, B. p. 184.



Ill. 168. *Qal'at Sim'an. Baptistery, section (after de Vogüé).*

Midjleyyā is to be counted among the baptisteries. One of these is a second baptistery at Dêr Sêtā,²⁷⁶ which has the unusual plan of a hexagon (Ill. 167). The little building was first published by M. de Vogüé. It appears not to have been connected with any church, although it is not very far from the great church which has its own baptistery. Only two of its six sides are well preserved, but the foundations give the plan in outline. Much of the fallen material has been carried away, so that no accurate restoration could be made of the interior. M. de Vogüé, however, seems to be certain that there was an interior hexagon of six columns. There were three doorways flanked by windows in three adjoining sides, and two windows in each of the remaining sides. A fine base moulding encircled the building, and a salient cornice crowned the walls. The window mouldings were carried in curves from opening to opening and forming a string moulding at the angles on the sill level.

Qal'at Sim'an.

The great baptistery of Northern Syria was that

at Qal'at Sīm'an.²⁷⁷ It stood with a beautiful church upon its south side and monastic buildings to the east of it, at the eastern extremity of the plateau covered by the convent of Saint Simeon. The core of the building is an octagon within a square (Plan, Ill 194-O), the solid angles between the two figures being filled with niches semicircular and square. The east side of the octagon is occupied by an apse for which a solid rectangular mass of masonry protrudes from the octagon. This inner square was surrounded by a great outer square which provided arched passages all around the baptistery. This outer square has three portals and two large windows on every side, providing easy approach and convenient circulation (Ill. 168). The interior octagon rises high above the surrounding walls of the outer square in the form of an octagonal drum pierced with windows, and adorned with exterior angle colonnettes carried on brackets. The drum was roofed with an eight sided pyramid of wood, and the surrounding aisle by steep pitched wooden lean-tos.

4. CHURCHES OF NORTHEASTERN SYRIA

Churches dated in the years: 504, 512, 536, 558, 560, 564, 582, 593 and 606 A.D.

THE sixth century churches of Northeastern Syria fall easily into three classes: class I, the basilicas, in which there is ample variety of ground plan and superstructure; class 2, the central structures, also providing much in the way of variety; and class 3, the very small number of chapels.

CLASS I.

The Basilicas.

In this class will be found churches large and small, some with broad and some with narrow interior arches, several with columnar supports, many with rectangular piers, many with straight east walls concealing apse

²⁷⁶ S. C. Pl. 117. A. II, p. 238.

²⁷⁷ S. C. Pls. 149, 150.

and side chambers, a few showing the exterior curve of the apse, but only one with a rectangular sanctuary. A number of the churches were built entirely of basalt; in a few the apse and side chambers were of stone, but in the majority only the foundations were of durable material, the rest being of mud-brick,

*Kerrātīn, (Tarutia). "Cathedral" of St. Stephen.*²⁷⁸ 505/5 A.D.

Ancient *Tarutia* was a large city. Most of its buildings of all kinds were built of stone at least as high as the first storey. The Arabs called it „Tarrutīn of the Merchants”, for it had important markets. But the buildings, though of stone, were not well built. The columns and arches of buildings of different kinds were well made, and often far more richly ornamented than those of any other city in the whole region, but the walls were not made to withstand the shocks of earthquake, with the result that the ruins of the city are a vast field of fallen walls, from which occasional arches and columns rise to a height of four or five metres above the masses of broken stone. The great church which I have called the Cathedral, is the largest single church that has been discovered thus far in Syria, being about 60 m. long and 26 m. wide. It was probably dedicated in the name of Saint Stephen, the Holy First Martyr. At an early date, either at the end of the Christian period or soon after the Moslem conquest, the church was converted into a fortress, battering walls were erected against the walls of the church, and stout towers were set at the four angles and in the middle of the two long sides. Whether this was done while the church was still standing or after it had become a ruin, one can not tell. The battering walls are over four metres high, and completely conceal all the structure behind them. Above them, the walls are reduced to the same level. The interior was filled with partition walls and roofed structures of mud, so that the whole is filled up to the level of the tops of the fortification walls, and some of the interior rooms have become underground chambers. Nevertheless, the plan of the church is easily made out (*Ill.* 169), and four of the original seven arches of the narthex are in situ. The entire semicircle of the apse with five windows in it, was visible between square side chambers which were provided with interior transverse arches, and opened through arches upon the ends of the aisles. The narthex consisted of three arches borne on two columns at the end of the main aisle, and square apartments composed of four arches, at the ends of the side aisles. The important and interesting feature of this

narthex is the set of four exterior buttresses which are cruciform and provided exterior projecting buttresses for the transverse arches. The arrangement of the interior could not be made out and all the ornamental details have disappeared.

*Zebed. Church of St. Sergios.*²⁷⁹ 512 A.D.

This church is of interest chiefly for the inscription that was carved upon its main portal, a trilingual in Greek, Arabic and Syriac, with the date 512. The building is now almost level with the ground, but its plan shows a nave about 28 m. long, having four broad bays separated by three rectangular piers on either side. The apse, horseshoe in plan, is flanked by side chambers which are not entirely rectangular, the walls next to the apse forming a hexagonal figure about it.

*il-Anderīn. Barrack Church.*²⁸⁰ 558 A.D.

The church in the middle of the enclosure of the great square barracks or fortress in the city of *il-Anderīn*, was built entirely of basalt. Its nave was nearly square, being 13.70 m. long and 14.56 m. wide. The apse was broad and deep and was flanked by large side chambers. The nave was probably divided by piers into three broad bays. The lintels of the western and southern portals have inscriptions in relief, that of the west portal is enriched by a disc containing an ornamental cross and a band of highly conventionalized grapevine terminating in a chalice at either end, all in low relief. The church was probably erected by that „Munificent Thomas” who built the barracks at the same time, 558 A.D.

*il-Anderīn. "Cathedral".*²⁸¹ *circ.* 560 A.D.

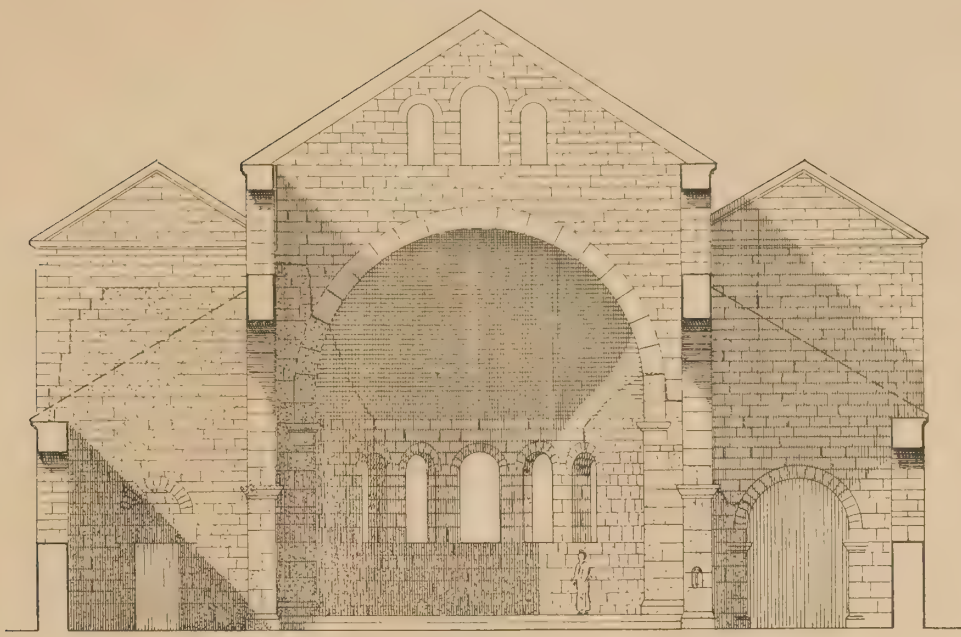
Another fine large church in this region is the so-called Cathedral of *Androna*, (*Ill.* 170) which was built of stone throughout. It was about 43 m. long and 25 m. wide. Parts of its east and west ends are standing and its interior piers and the doorways are still in place. A part of the curve of the apse, with five windows in it, is displayed between the walls of the large square side chambers. The diaconicon, on the north, is directly connected with the apse and has a small doorway upon the aisle. The prothesis has an archway upon the south aisle and an exterior portal to the south. Both chambers now have wide arches in their east walls; these arches are unfinished on the exterior, and I believe that they originally opened into small apses, the half domes of which were perhaps of sun-baked brick. The nave was divided by three broad arches on either side, carried upon

²⁷⁸ *P.* II, B. p. 73 f.

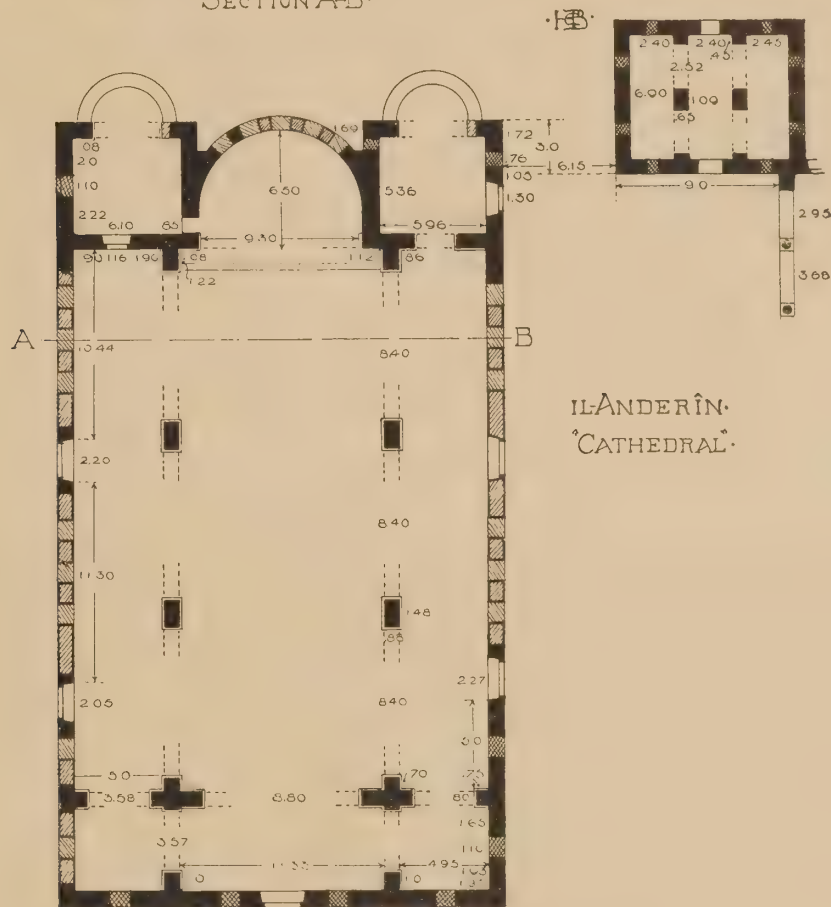
²⁷⁹ *A.* II, p. 305, *Ill.* 305.

²⁸⁰ *P.* II, B. p. 50, Pl. VIII.

²⁸¹ *P.* II, B. p. 52 f.

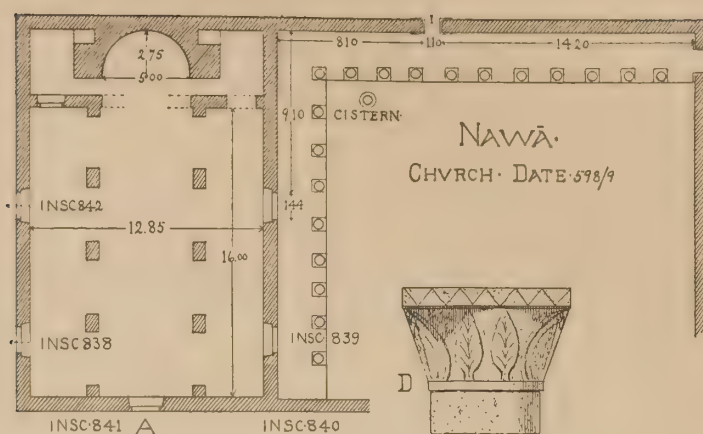


SECTION A-B.



Ill. 170.

Early Churches in Syria



Ill. 171 Nawā. Church, plan, Date: 598/9. A.D.

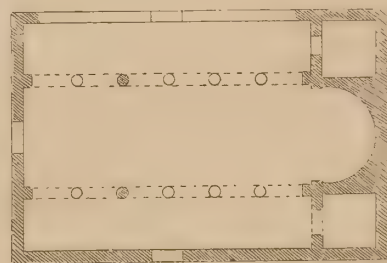
two slender piers. At the west end were cruciform piers supporting a broad transverse arch across the side aisles and narrow longitudinal arches over the interior narthex. The west wall had but one portal, and the squares in the two angles, formed by the arches, were carried up in tribunes or towers, one of which, on the south, is partly preserved with one large window. The side walls have collapsed, but the jambs of the portals, two on a side, are still in place. An arched window in the prothesis shows that the windows were large and composed of small voussoirs. The ornament of the portals was very flat and consisted of moulded bands and discs. It is evident that the figures of two peacocks in low relief have been hacked away from the upper part of the lintel of the entrance to the prothesis. The half dome of the apse was built in part of good brick, like that used in the barracks. Since this material is very rare in Syria, it may be assumed that the church is about contemporary with the other building which was erected in 558.

Nawā.²⁸² 598 A.D.

The church at Nawā is typical of the churches of the period in this part of Syria. The lower courses of its walls, its interior supports and arches and the frames of its portals were of basalt; all the rest was of mud-brick. The deeply set apse opens directly upon both side chambers, the nave was divided into four bays by three rectangular piers on either side (Ill. 171). There were two portals in the side aisles and one in the west front. South of the church was a colonnaded atrium, the capitals of which are not without interest. The lintels of the portals are adorned with inscriptions in large and beautiful letters in high relief. The inscriptions are verses from the *Psalms* of David and the *Song of Solomon*, in praise of the church.

Mu'allak.²⁸³ 606 A.D.

There is a group of three churches in Mu'allak, in the Djebel il-Ḥaṣṣ, all of which substitute columns for piers in the bays of the nave. Of these three, the West Church bears the very late date 606 A.D. Only the lower courses of the walls of these churches were built of stone, yet the plans were easily traced. The dated West Church is the smallest of the group. Its east end consists of an apse between side chambers, the nave had six bays (Ill. 172). The North Church is a little larger, but it is identical in plan. The South Church is still larger; its plan is substantially the same, but its nave has much wider arches carried by only four columns on either side. At the west front are the foundations of two small towers on either side of the main portal. A capital in the South Church is illustrated in the second part of this volume (Ill. 267). An inscription on the south portal of the West Church tells us that *This house of the holy father (or abbot) Baraps(?) was built in the 918th year. i.e. 606 A.D.* In Mir'āyeh, near the east end of the ruined town, are the remains of a church, the plan of which, could not be perfectly made out. The nave was about 20 m. long and was divided by arches on columns. There are remains of a mosaic pavement, and of a low walled exedra near the middle of the church.²⁸⁴

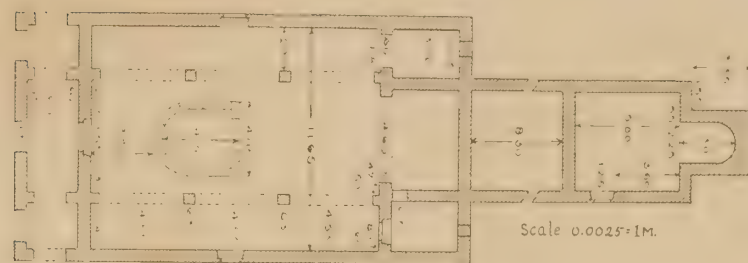


Ill. 172. Mu'allak, West Church, plan.

²⁸² P. II, B. p. 13 f.

²⁸³ A. II, p. 305 f.

²⁸⁴ P. II, B. p. 69, Ill. 74.



Ill. 173. *il-Firdjeh. Church, plan.*

*il-Firdjeh.*²⁸⁵

The only church in all this great region that is known to have had a rectangular sanctuary between side chambers is the little church of *il-Firdjeh* (Ill. 173) which has other peculiarities. Extending eastward from the side walls of the sanctuary are two walls of about eight metres length which terminate at the angles of a small square chapel with a deep set apse enclosed in rectangular walls protruding to the east. This chapel was entered only by a doorway in the south wall. If the building was a baptistery, it is the only one that has been discovered thus far in Northeastern Syria, and its position would be unique among the known baptisteries of all Syria. This is the position of many Lady chapels in the Mediaeval churches of Europe, and this region abounds in inscriptions which show that the cult of the Virgin — Theotokos — was much in favour here; it is interesting to speculate as to whether this might possibly have been a very early Lady chapel. The nave of the church is divided in the ordinary way, by piers, into three bays and there was an enclosed narthex. In the middle aisle is an exedra consisting of a low wall describing a semicircle toward the west, the ends of the semicircle being produced westward a distance equal to its radius and then returned inward to form a narrow gate. This west wall with its little entrance is exactly on the bisecting line of the nave, there is hardly a metre's space between the sides of the exedra and the piers of the nave, and the western curve comes to within four metres of the west wall of the nave.

*Reşâfah.*²⁸⁶ (*Sergiopolis*). Church of St. Sergios.

A step in advance in the development the basilicas of Northeastern Syria takes us to *Sergiopolis* not far from the Euphrates, a large ruined town, walled like a huge fortress, and containing the remains of no less

than four churches of different kinds. The handsome city gates, the walls, and the two great churches were built of gypsum, which appears to have been the chief building material of the locality. The stone was a beautiful one, but judging by photographs, it was not capable of being quarried in such large blocks, or of being given so high a finish, as the limestone of Northern Syria, for the walls have a rougher and more irregular appearance. Moreover, the churches show less carved ornamental detail. Two of the churches are of central plan, and are discussed a little farther on, the other was a large basilica. One of the former was probably the Martyrion which contained the relics of Saint Sergios, the other was perhaps a monastic church and may have contained the throne of a bishop. The church is mentioned by Procopius, who says that the city wall was built by Justinian; and since *Sergiopolis* was one of the few places which flourished as a Christian centre after the Moslem conquest, it appears that we know more about its later than about its earlier history. The great Arab physician, Ibn Butlân, was a guest of the bishop here about 1050. He writes that there was a church within the fortifications, adorned on the outside with gold mosaics. He further states that the Khalif Hishâm (724—743 A.D.) resided here; that in his own day the place was inhabited chiefly by Christians, and that it once belonged to an-Nu'mân, who was a Christian. The fortress was built by Hishâm, the place was populous, and there was much buying and selling there. Yâkût, an Arab geographer, writing as an eyewitness about 1225, mentions a convent which was a wonder of beauty, and says that there were monks and other religious men in it. In 1247 the place was destroyed by the Mongols. How much of all this refers to one or the other of the two important churches, one can not tell. It is certain that both were erected long before

²⁸⁵ P. II, B. p. 70.

²⁸⁶ F. Sarre. *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft*, II, Jahrgang 1909, p. 99 f.

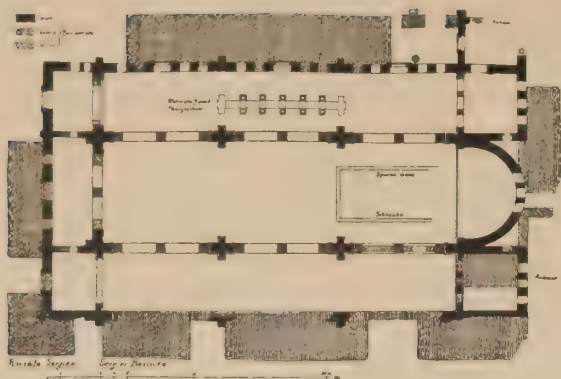
Procopius. *Aed. Just.* B. II, IX.

Lestrangé, *Palestine under the Moslems*, pp. 36, 432, 521—523.

Sarre und Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise im Euphrat-und-Tigris-Gebiet*, 1920, II, pp. 1—45.

H. Spanner und S. Guyer, *Rusafa*, 1926.

Early Churches in Syria.



Ill. 174. *Reşâfah. Church of St. Sergios, plan*
(after Herzfeld).

the Hegira. Ibn Butlân says that the church was begun by order of Constantine; but the Arab writers have a way of giving credit for the erection of all famous churches to Constantine, the son of Helena, "the founder of Christianity". According to Procopius, the emperor Anastasios was responsible for many large building operations in Euphratensis, early in the sixth century. This period seems the most probable one for both churches, as Procopius would have given full credit to Justinian if that emperor had been responsible for them. A church that remained a Christian house of worship during a period of seven hundred years is far more likely to have undergone changes than the great body of Syrian churches which were abandoned two centuries or less after they were erected, and the Sergios basilica²⁸⁷ of Reşâfah shows unmistakable signs of alteration at two different periods after its original completion. As it stands to-day, three periods are to be distinguished in the ruined structure; but, since only two of these were Christian, we may eliminate the third, for its remains consist of late military additions which are presumably Turkish.

The original plan (Ill. 174) was a rectangle, 31 m. long and 19.50 m. wide. At the east end is an apse, horseshoe in plan and with three windows, between square side chambers, both of which open upon the aisles by triple arches, and have three windows toward the east. The nave was divided into three square bays by arches carried upon *cruciform* piers. The cruciform piers at the western ends of the arcades carried a broad transverse arch over the main aisle, narrow transverse arches over the side aisle, and two narrow arches over the narthex which was bounded by a wall with three doorways toward the west. The inner members, or arms, of the cruciform piers of the

nave were built up in rectangular shafts, precisely like those at Ruwêhâ (p. 145), against the spandrels of the two great longitudinal arches, extending up into the clearstorey where they were crowned with caps, and, undoubtedly, supported transverse arches, like those at Ruwêhâ. The outer members of these same piers were apparently also carried up to the clearstorey, but the plan drawn by Herzfeld shows no indication that there were transverse arches over the aisles, and a photograph,²⁸⁸ shown in the article quoted above, gives no suggestion of such features, although the plan and another photograph show outside buttresses projecting from the side walls, as if to reinforce arches over the aisles.²⁸⁹ One of the piers in the photograph, apparently shows stones laid on slanting beds, so that it is not impossible that aisle arches did exist here originally. The clearstorey had eighteen windows on either side, six over each arch. The windows were separated by colonnettes supported upon corbels at the clearstorey level, quite like those in the great church at Ǧal'at Sim'ân, with the difference that the colonnettes were repeated on the outside of the clearstorey wall. The ornament of this earlier structure was practically all in the form of mouldings, and this decorative similarity to the church of Saint Simeon is further shown by the use of a modillion cornice, such as is found at Ǧal'at Sim'ân (p. 102), on the archivolts of the wall arches of the diaconicon²⁹⁰ and was confined to the impost of the half dome, and the caps of various kinds.

The extensive alterations of a later day consisted in the placing of two sub-arches under each of the great arches of the main arcade and at the west end. These pairs of sub-arches were supported by columns set against the faces of the piers and half way between them. The spandrels were built up in good stonework, but the lunettes above were filled in with poor masonry that looks like inferior brickwork. The columns with their uncut Corinthian capitals, which were inserted to carry the sub-arches, bear every mark of sixth century work of Northern Syria, and were probably inserted, with their arches, to give greater security to the great arches, perhaps after some earthquake, well within a hundred years after the original building of the church; unless they were pillaged from some other early building in the city, of which at least two, of basilical plan, are shown in Herzfeld's map of the town. In this case it would be impossible to fix the date of the alteration.²⁹¹

²⁸⁷ Sarre und Herzfeld, *op. cit.* II, pp. 3—16.

²⁸⁸ The plan published by H. Spanner and S. Guyer, *Rusafa*, Tafl. 13, does not show these exterior buttresses.

²⁸⁹ Sarre und Herzfeld, *op. cit.*, II, Abb. 35.

²⁹¹ S. Guyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 54, 55, attributes the construction of the original basilica to the reign of the Byzantine emperor Anastasios (491—518), and holds that the first rebuilding was done in the first half of the IXth century.

²⁸⁸ *Op. cit.*, II, Abb. 133, 111, Pls. LVIII, LIX.

*Reṣâfah.*²⁹² *Basilica "B". Basilica "C".*

Since the expedition of Sarre and Herzfeld to Reṣâfah, the ruins of two other churches have been photographed and measured. Basilica „B” was a large church to the west of the Sergios basilica, and all that remains of it are the southeast and southwest corners. The remains show that the central apse at the east end was horseshoe in plan on the interior, and probably polygonal on the exterior. The apse was connected directly with both side chambers, which were rectangular, by lateral passages that also opened upon spiral staircases leading up to the chambers above the prothesis and diaconicon. In addition to the doorways leading into the sanctuary, both chambers were connected with the side aisles by rectangular doors covered by relieving arches; and from each chamber a side door led into another rectangular chamber, probably a chapel, which had a small apse that was horseshoe curved on the interior and projected in a rectangular block on the exterior, like the chapels of the Martyrion at Reṣâfah (*Ill.* 177). While the appearance of double chambers, flanking the apse, was certainly not common in Northeastern Syria, this arrangement was frequently used in the Coptic churches of Egypt and appears in two Armenian churches, — the eighth century church at Odzun²⁹³ and the great church at Ereruk, which Strzygowski dates in the sixth century.²⁹⁴ As in these later Armenian churches, the corner chapels of Basilica „B” opened upon exterior aisles, lateral porches, which ran along the side of the church until they were closed at the west end by chambers flanking the western narthex. The existence of these side galleries, or porches, is proved by the manner in which the wall at the southwest corner terminates both on the west and south sides in three-quarter columns, showing that the side of the building was treated in a manner similar to the western narthex. The arches of the large and small apses were of horseshoe curve. While there were transverse arches across the chamber at the southwest corner,²⁹⁵ not only the superstructure, but even the plan itself, of the main body of the church is unknown. A restoration by Guyer²⁹⁶ shows a wide nave, divided from the side aisles by rectangular piers, and a double narthex at the west end flanked by side chambers. Guyer suggests,

however, that the interior may have been divided in a cruciform manner like the central church outside the walls at Reṣêfah (*Ill.* 181), or may have been what he calls a „cloister church with a transverse nave”. Its date is placed at about the beginning of the sixth century.

The other church, called Basilica „C”,²⁹⁷ is again a church of the early sixth century, but, in this case, of the more typical Syrian type. From the somewhat scanty remains, it appears to have been a three aisled basilica of the longitudinal system, with side chambers flanking the apse, which was semicircular on the interior and entirely within the east wall. Both chambers were connected only with the side aisles; and at the west end two chambers flanked the narthex, suggesting the towered façades of the sixth century Syrian churches.

*iṭ-Ṭûbâ.*²⁹⁸ 582 A.D.

Another step forward in the structural development of the basilica, if one may assume a basilical restoration for this church,²⁹⁹ was taken by the builders of the little church at iṭ-Ṭûbâ (*Ill.* 175), in the ʿAlâ. Here a concealed apse is connected with both side chambers, one reached from the north aisle through a doorway, the other from the south aisle by an arch. The nave is divided by two cruciform piers on either side into two large and one small bay, the latter forming an interior narthex. Wall buttresses project *inward* from the aisle walls, opposite to the cruciform piers and transverse arches were thrown across the nave and side aisles. These arches all have fallen. A study of the fallen details assures one that the lower, narrower arches did not receive the actual thrust of the high arches, for there was a clearstorey between them; but, of course, they greatly solidified the entire structure. The introduction here of columns and sub-arches, like those of Reṣâfah, and the addition of arches connecting the columns with the side walls, would not only have given an alternation of light and heavy supports, but would have made a plan so divided into squares large and small, that cross vaults might have been applied to the superstructure without further change. The prothesis of this church is roofed

²⁹² H. Spanner und S. Guyer, *Rusafa*, 1926, pp. 38—42, 62—65, Tafels 26/2, 27—30.

²⁹³ Strzygowski, *Die Baukunst der Armenier*, I, p. 174, Abb. 208.

²⁹⁴ Strzygowski, *Die Baukunst der Armenier*, I, p. 153, Abb. 177.

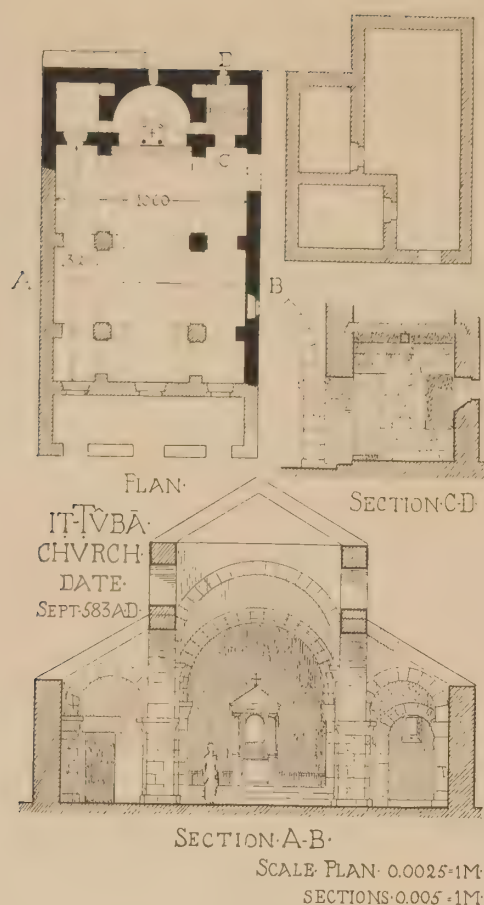
²⁹⁵ Spanner und Guyer, op. cit., Taf. 30.

²⁹⁷ Spanner und Guyer, op. cit., p. 70, Abb. 19.

²⁹⁶ Spanner und Guyer, op. cit., Abb. 15.

²⁹⁸ *P.* II, B. p. 20.

²⁹⁹ Professor Butler was perhaps mistaken in restoring this badly ruined building at iṭ-Ṭûbâ as a basilica church. Heinrich Glück, *Der Breit-und-Longhausbau in Syrien*, p. 74, calls attention to the fact that its plan is really cruciform, like the central churches at il-Anderin (*Ill.* 180) and Reṣâfah (*Ill.* 177). Since iṭ-Ṭûbâ is near Kaṣr ibn Wardân and il-Anderin, with their cruciform churches and domes, and is in the same Northeastern region of Syria as Reṣâfah, it is less confusing to consider this church at iṭ-Ṭûbâ, dated late in the sixth century, as an example of the cruciform type of building, perhaps domical, which was penetrating Syria from the Persian region to the northeast.



Ill. 175

in stone. The ciborium, which was discovered, broken in fragments, in the apse, is described in the second part of this volume.

Other churches, perhaps of the sixth century.

The church of Saint Stephen at Umm it-Tuwêneh³⁰⁰ and certain churches at il-Anderîn, — including the “Church of the Trinity”,³⁰¹ the Double Church of “Saint Michael and Saint Gabriel”³⁰² and the “Church of Saint Theodore”³⁰³ —, were all described by Professor Butler as fifth century churches in Northeastern Syria. I include them here among the sixth century churches of this region because they form a group, all in the ʿAlā, with the churches at Nawā,³⁰⁴ Dêr Nawā,³⁰⁵ it-Tûbā³⁰⁶ and is-Ruḥaiyeh,³⁰⁷ which are dated by inscriptions in the sixth century. These churches form a group distinct from all other churches of Syria, because all of them have lateral openings from *both* side chambers into the space in front of the apse, a feature which must have come in with some liturgical change. Since all the dated churches are sixth century, it is presumable that the whole group belongs to the sixth century.

CLASS 2

Central Structures

The churches of central plan in Northwestern Syria, for the most part, were domed. The undoubted use of domes of mud-brick in large numbers of buildings of various kinds, and the building of the half domes of churches in this same crude material, would have led very early to the application of dome structure to church building. Several of the churches of the region almost certainly had domes of the sun-baked material. The introduction of kiln-baked brick in the early part of the sixth century also suggested experiments in dome construction. This brick possibly may have been made somewhere in the neighbourhood; but its appearance in a very limited locality, in only three different sites and in only six different buildings, rather leads to the conclusion that it was imported, especially as, in three of the buildings, it is employed in connexion with imported marbles. Two of the buildings with domes of baked brick can be shown to have been built thirty-eight years apart. But the introduction of the dome came too late in the history of Christian architecture of Syria for any general type to be evolved. The problem of the dome was handled independently in the separate localities and regions of Central Syria. All the domes in question with the exception of Fa'lûl and Mir'āyeh were set upon a square composed of four arches carried upon piers, which means that the domes must have been adjusted to the square, either by squinch arches, or by true pendentives. In one of the domes described below, that at Kaṣr Ibn Wardân, we find a curious pendentive pierced with an arched window, which, in a way, suggests a combination of the pendentive and squinch. These builders had excellent examples of pendentive construction in such neighbouring buildings as the baths at Brād in Northern Syria. In the domed churches known in this region there are five distinct types of plans and of substructures for the dome, types as different as if they had been evolved in widely separated parts of the globe.

*Fa'lûl. Church of the Archangels.*³⁰⁸ A.D. 526.

It is a pity that this central church, dated years earlier than the earliest dates given to most of the Byzantine domed churches, should have been so completely destroyed. It was a beautiful building, in which basalt and brick, limestone and marble, were used

³⁰⁰ Cf. p. 82.

³⁰¹ Cf. p. 80.

³⁰² Cf. p. 81.

³⁰³ Cf. p. 82.

³⁰⁴ Cf. p. 160.

³⁰⁵ Cf. p. 110.

³⁰⁶ Cf. p. 163.

³⁰⁷ Cf. p. 111.

³⁰⁸ P. II, B. p. 96 f.



Ill. 176. Fa'lul. Church of the Archangels, view from Southeast, showing ruins of apse.

with fine discretion. Only parts of its lower storey which was of basalt, and fragments of its upper storey walls which were of limestone and marble, are standing. The interior is a heap of broken bricks and mortar, with carved details in basalt, limestone and marble, protruding from it on every side. Fortunately the principal outlines of the ground plan are evident (*Ill. 195-V*). The main body of the church was circular, the eastern quadrant opening upon the east end of a typical basilica, i.e. a narrow apse between side chambers projecting eastward; while to the western quadrant was added a rectangular narthex. The curve of the apse projected slightly beyond the line of the side chambers. It had three windows, and was built of solid blocks of marble. (*Ill. 176*) One can not tell how the west ends of the side chambers were treated, but the north chamber had a tunnel vaulted recess at the east end. There was also a tunnel vault over the bema in front of the main apse. Three windows occupied the north quadrant, and three the south; while three portals in the west quadrant gave access from the narthex. The narthex was joined to the circle by four arches, those at the ends meeting the circular wall upon triangular buttresses built out from it. The four piers of the narthex were squares with flat pilasters on every side making them slightly cruciform. The above is all that can be determined with regard to

the plan until excavations shall have been undertaken.

The wall of the lower storey, and the piers and arches of the narthex, were of black basalt. The former was finished off with a deeply carved string moulding of the same material, and the caps and faces of the latter were adorned with fine mouldings. Mouldings and rich surface carving adorned the marble window frames of the apse. Of the upper storey we know little, save that sections of the wall were built of large limestone blocks, and that there were tall rectangular piers of marble between the window openings. Everything above and outside of these details, including the dome, must be restored by conjecture. That a dome existed is shown by the high masses of brick which fill the interior. These masses are as high as the sides of the lintels of the doorways, and are higher in the middle. It seems improbable that a dome covered the whole fifteen-metre span of the interior; it is quite likely there was a small dome within, and that this was surmounted by a vaulted aisle and tribune. For the small dome we have no evidence on the spot; but for the tribune we have the evidence of the pier that stood between windows of an upper storey. In other parts of the ruins of Fa'lul there are marble columns, all apparently of the same size and scale, and, since this is the only building here of unusual magnificence, it may be taken



Ill. 177. *Reşâfah. The Martyrion, plan*
(after Herzfeld).

for granted that these columns came from the church.³⁰⁹ There are two inscriptions connected with this church. That of the main portal reads *Chapel of the Archangels, built by the most glorious Diogenes. In the Year 838 (526—7 A.D.).* The other, on a displaced corbel, reads *Archangel Gabriel, help!*

*Reşâfah.*³¹⁰ (*Sergiopolis*). *The Martyrion.*

The observations which have been made with regard to the history of the basilica of Saint Sergios at Reşâfah (p. 161) apply also to this church. The church which was probably a martyrion, stands about 150 m. to the northwest of the basilica, and is oriented more nearly due east and west. It was a large structure, measuring 42 m. long and 34 m. wide over all. It was built of a fine grade of gypsum, in comparatively small blocks. The plan (Ill. 177) suggests that of the church of Fa'lûl described above, because the sides and west end of the nave are curved out in segments of circles; but the curves are not concentric, and are little more than broad, shallow exedras in the walls of a basilica. The east end is very like that of Fa'lûl,³¹¹ except that the apse is horseshoe in plan and polygonal, instead of curved, on the exterior, and that the side chambers have little horseshoe shaped apses, which appear as rectangular projections on the outside. All

three apses are vaulted with half domes which are distinctly bulbous, being horseshoe in cross section. The side chambers have doorways in their west walls. It is interesting to find that there are remains of the interior dividing features of the nave. These are hardly visible above the plan; but are full of suggestion. The foundations show that there were piers which divided the interior into a three-aisled basilica, that, in the line of these piers, there were semicircular exedras almost concentric with the segmental curves of the side walls, and that there was a similar exedra, at the end of the middle aisle, just within and concentric with the segmental curve of the west wall. Three of these piers are those at the side of the exedras; those at the east end were connected by arches with the responds beside the apse. The exedras probably consisted of columns, if we take the example of the Church of Saint Mary at Amida, or that of the "Cathedral of Aleppo" which is described below. Sarre and Herzfeld do not record finding any bricks among the débris of the interior, and claim that the walls were too weak to have carried a cupola. Their suggested restoration for the covering of the nave is a flat roof, with perhaps a pyramidal roof of wood over the crossing.³¹²

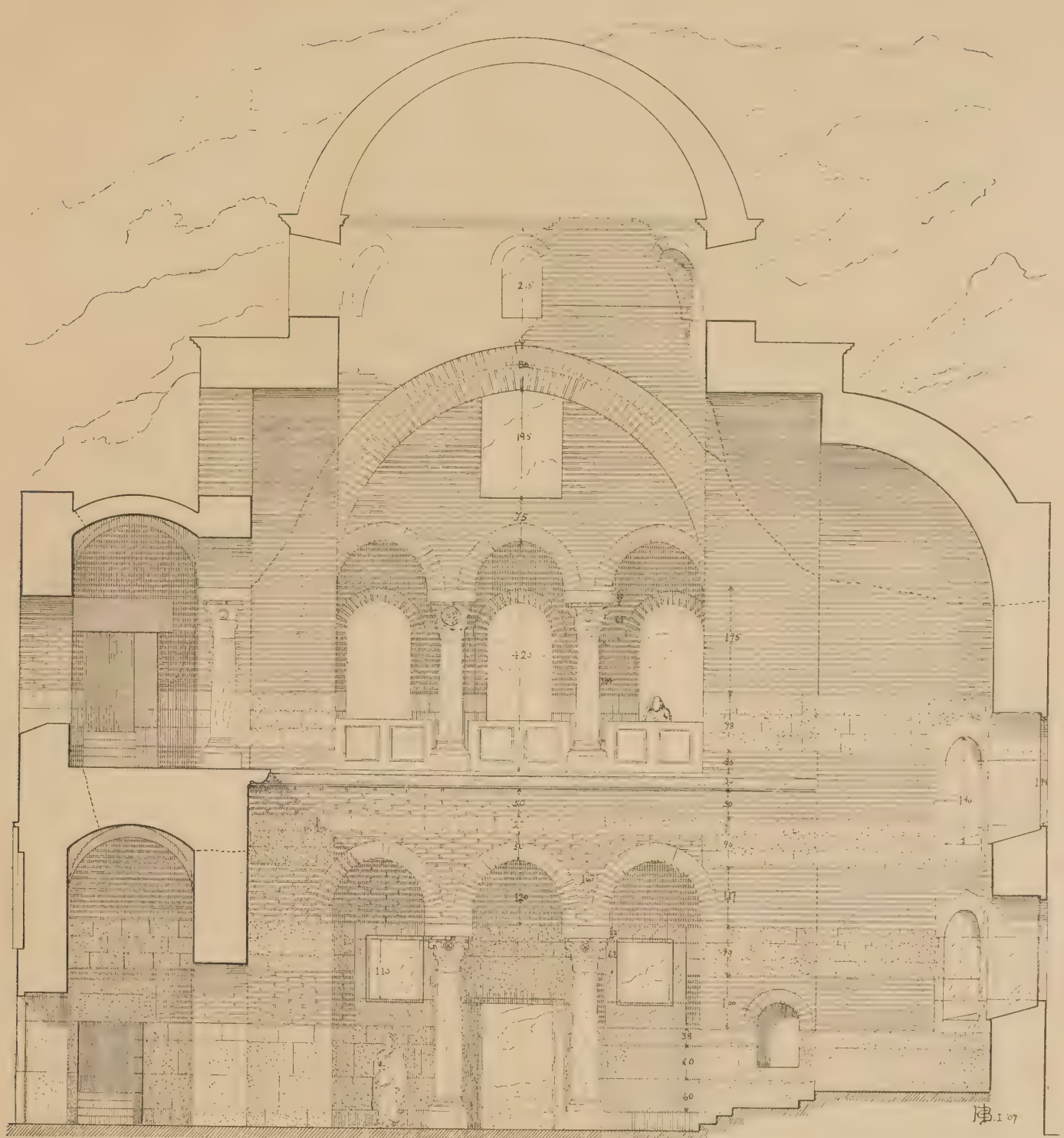
The ornament of the church is not profuse. The arched windows of the apse have exterior mouldings which are returned at the arch level, like many examples in Northern Syria. The great horseshoe arch of the apse has a set of rich mouldings which are returned at their springing, and a narrow carved moulding at the impost of the half dome which appears to have had the horseshoe form. The caps of the apse piers are of foliate design with garlands; those of the responds are like them, but are set on a lower level. The most beautiful carving in the church, as it stands, is that of the archivolt of one of the side apses. The broad band of richly decorated mouldings is returned outward on either side, and there is a symbolical disc, set in a horseshoe of foliage, upon the keystone. The widest of the carved bands presents a conventional

³⁰⁹ While it is only possible to speculate upon a restoration for this church at Fa'lûl, I have omitted from the text Professor Butler's suggestion that its interior might be restored like the circular church at Zwarthnotz, a seventh century building near Etschmiadzin in Armenia (Strzygowski, *Der Dom zu Aachen*, pp. 33—37 and *Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa*, I, pp. 108—118). Instead, largely on the basis of the columns which were found in the church, I call attention to a possible restoration, which Professor Butler himself mentions on page 165, as suggested by the similarity in plan between this church at Fa'lûl and two central churches, one at Reşâfah and the other the church of *El Hadra* at Amida (Strzygowski, *Amida*, p. 192, Abb. 110 and *Die Baukunst der Armenier*, II, Abb. 539), which are both in the same Northeastern region of Syria. This general similarity makes it seem likely that the interior of the church at Fa'lûl was divided up, by piers and columns, into a central square, covered by a dome and buttressed by great apsidal niches, in some such manner as is suggested by the Martyrion at Reşâfah (Ill. 177).

³¹⁰ Sarre und Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise im Euphrat-und-Tigris Gebiet*, II, pp. 28—38. H. Spanner und S. Guyer, *Rusafa*, 1926, pp. 35—38, 56—62.

³¹¹ The plan of this church at Reşâfah recalls even more closely the suggested restoration of the church of the Virgin (*El Hadra*) at Amida (Strzygowski, *Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa*, II, p. 503, Abb. 539) and was probably vaulted in a manner suggested by the cruciform arrangement of vaults over the palace at Kaşr Ibn Wardân (Strzygowski, *Amida*, pp. 221—223).

³¹² Sarre und Herzfeld, op. cit., pp. 29—30.



KASHIBNWARDÂN.
CHVRCH.
LONGITVDINALSECTION.

SCALE: 1CM=1M.

Ill. 178.



Ill. 179. Qasr Ibn Wardân. Church, exterior from the East.

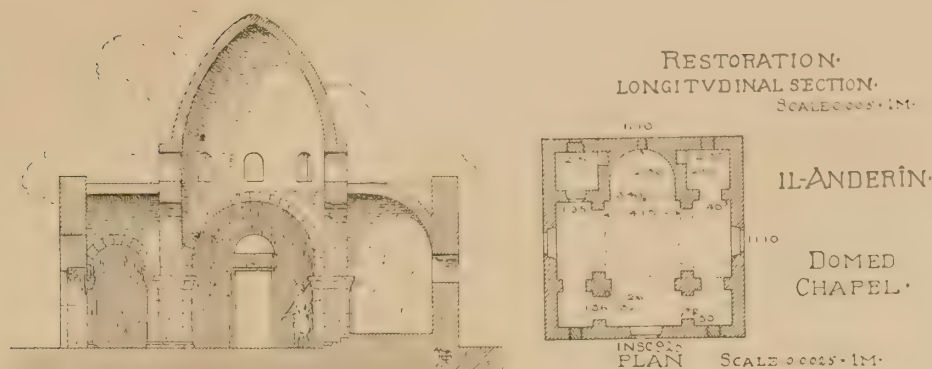
grapevine growing out of vases at the ends, like several examples in Northern Syria, e. g. Qalb Lauzeh. There are beads and egg-and-dart interspersed with leaves, which might have come from Qal'at Sim'an, the minute crenellation, and the narrow running vine, are found in the country further west, the inverted eggs with two small roundels between are more like the Nabataean patterns from Southern Syria; but there are other patterns, not easily made out in the photograph, which are not found in other Christian or Pagan buildings in Syria so far as I know.

*Qasr Ibn Wardân. Church.*³¹³ 564 A.D.

This church belongs to an extraordinary group of buildings, made up of a fortress, or barracks, a large palace and this church. All three buildings were built of basalt and kiln-dried brick of the best quality, all possessed elaborate vault structures, and two, at least, had domes. The church and palace included limestone and marble, as well as basalt and brick, in their materials. The palace is definitely dated by an inscription of the year 564 A.D. and there can be no doubt that the entire group was erected at the same time, and probably under foreign influence. The aim of the

plan of this domed church is not new (*Ill. 195-Q*); it is an attempt to solve the problem of placing a dome over a three aisled basilica; but the method by which the problem was solved, and the way in which the dome was constructed find no parallel in the history of the architecture of the period. The central square over which the dome was to be placed was lengthened toward the east and west by walls which were to carry tunnel vaults. An apse, narrower than the square, protrudes to the east, flanked by side chambers, in the ordinary Syrian fashion. Side aisles extended westward from the side chambers, and opened into the central space by three arches, carried by two columns on either side. The aisle was returned across the west end to form an interior narthex. Above the side aisles and the narthex was a gallery opening into the central space through arches, three on each side. The gallery is reached by a stair-tower built out from the northwest angle of the church; there was no other tower. The side chambers, the aisles, the narthex and the whole of the gallery were vaulted by domed cross vaults of brick set between wide transverse arches of brick, which did not protrude below the vaulting surfaces. The three arches of the gallery were em-

³¹³ *P. II, B. p. 29 f. cf. Strzygowski, Kleinasien . . . p. 121 f.*



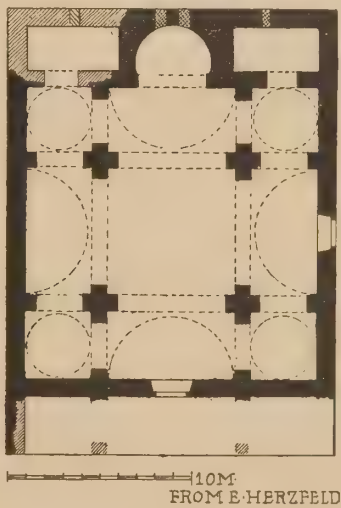
Ill. 180.

braced by a wide wall arch. The spaces above the springing of the great tunnel vaults at the east and west were built to form a solid rectangle, flat on the top, and from this, on the exterior, rose an octagon which carried the circular dome. Inside this exterior octagon were the actual pendentives which were also braced by the mass of the rectangle below. The dome has fallen; but enough of its substructure remains to show that each pendentive was pierced by an arched window (Ill. 178) and that there was a window in each wall between the pendentives. The walls of the church, up to the level of the lintels of the portals, were of solid blocks of basalt, above this, of alternating bands of brickwork and basalt, 6 bands in all, to the sill level of the upper storey windows (Ill. 179). Above this point the entire structure was of brick. The same use of materials appeared outside and inside. Frames of limestone were inserted in the windows of the lower storey, and marble was used for the interior columns in both storeys, which were separated by a marble string course. All of the arches, with the exception of those of the apse windows were made of brick, and it is to be noted particularly that the great embracing wall arches over the gallery, the wide tunnel vaults, the apse arch and the arches of aisles and gallery are *two centred* arches, which gives a plainly pointed effect to their form. The exterior ornament is confined to the flat carving of the basalt lintels of the portals. The interior decoration consists of the yellow marble columns with their richly carved capitals of white marble and the moulded string course of yellow marble which divides the two storeys. The carving of the capitals is not Syrian in the sense that it resembles other work in the churches herein described. There are bits of mosaic lying in the ruins which suggest that parts of the interior were encrusted with colour.

il-Anderîn. Central Church. ³¹⁴

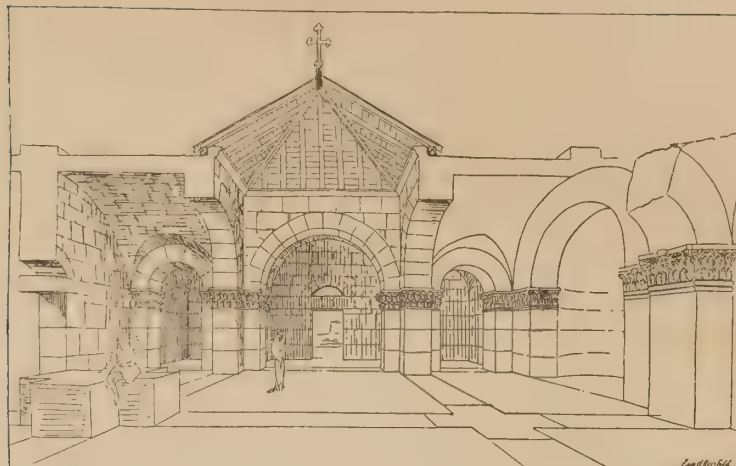
This little church, built in fulfillment of a vow by

Euklos, Sophia and their children, presents a type which was probably more common in this part of Syria than the ruins would indicate; for it was made up so largely of perishable materials that it easily might have been overlooked, as others of its class possibly were. It is now a mere mound of disintegrated mud-brick; but its stone portions are so disposed in the ruin that the plan was drawn and measured with ease. The outline is almost perfectly square (Ill. 180). At the east is an apse and side chambers, at the west, two cruciform piers which, with piers beside the apse, formed a square in the middle of the outer square. This inner square was bounded by broad arches, and smaller arches connecting the cruciform piers with flat piers in the walls, made squares in the western angles, corresponding to the side chambers opposite. All the piers and arches were of stone. The apse was covered by a half dome of mud-brick, the other arms of the interior cross, by tunnel vaults of the same material. In my restoration I have not hesitated to place a tall, sugar-loaf dome on pendentives above the crossing and it may very well be that



Ill. 181. *Reşâfah. Central Church, plan.*

³¹⁴ P. II, B. p. 56.



Ill. 182. *Reşâfah. Central Church, interior restored (after Herzfeld).*

smaller *kubbehs* covered the four compartments in the angles of the square.

Reşâfah. ³¹⁵ *Central Church.*

Another church at Reşâfah is the small, square church outside the north wall. The plan is somewhat like that of the little church of il-Anderîn described above, except that its horseshoe shaped apse and rectangular side chambers are outside of the square, and that the cruciform arrangement is entirely within the square. Dr. Sarre states that the arms of the cross are covered with tunnel vaults, and that the four angle spaces between the interior cross and the exterior square are covered with domes. He dismisses the idea of even a brick dome over the central square and restores the building with a pyramidal roof of wood over the centre (Ill. 182). ³¹⁶ In spite of the fact that the Constantinian octagon at Antioch was restored in 526 with a wooden dome in place of its stone cupola, a brick dome suggests itself as the likely form of roof for a central church in this part of Syria. The interior cross in this building measures 15 m. from end to end, and the central space is 6 m. square.

Mîrâyah. *Central Church.* ³¹⁷

The only polygonal church in this region is a small one, in complete delapidation, at Mîrâyah. In this building an octagon (Ill. 195) is attached to the east end of an ordinary basilica, with apse and side chambers. The apse arch occupies one side of the octagon, and the side chambers project to the entire diameter of the octagon, and are reached by oblique passages from doorways just beside the apse. The walls of this

building are preserved to a height of about two metres in stone; all the interior is heaped high with débris and earth, so that we may suggest a restoration in which a dome of mud-brick would be carried on an interior octagon of piers and arches. This plan is unique.

Aleppo. (Beroea). "Cathedral".

In the heart of the city of Aleppo there have been discovered remains of a Christian church which M. S. Guyer ³¹⁸ has published under the title of *La Madrasa al-Halâwiyyah d'Alep*, suggesting that the building may have been the Cathedral of Aleppo. The restored plan (Ill. 195-W) shows an oblong basilica, the middle aisle of which was covered by a series of three domes, a plan which would ordinarily be assigned to the later Middle Ages, but the details which are still in place are very perfectly preserved, and these manifest the principal characteristics of sixth century carving in Northern Syria. This fragment of a building is enclosed on all sides by Mediaeval, and more recent Moslem structures. It preserves only a fraction of the west end of the church, including a semicircular exedra of six columns, curving to the west just within the narthex, and east of this, a square space covered by a dome. The L shaped angle piers under the dome have free standing columns at the ends of the L, like those of the piers of the octagon at Ɣal'at Sim'ân. M. Guyer believes that the present dome is of Moslem construction, and he assumes that the arch below the east side of the dome opened into a similar square, and this into a third, both domed like the first, and that the east end was composed of an apse between side chambers. The floor of the interior is much higher

³¹⁵ Sarre und Herzfeld, op. cit., II, pp. 39—44. Strzygowski, *Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa*, II, p. 480 f.

³¹⁶ Sarre und Herzfeld, op. cit., Abb. 154. Spanner and Guyer, *Rusafa*, p. 42.

³¹⁷ P. II, B. p. 70.

³¹⁸ *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*. (1914) T. XI, pp. 217—231. Strzygowski, *Amida*, Abb. 116.



Ill. 183. Aleppo. "La Madrasa al-Halâwiyyah", capitals.

than the original pavement, so that nearly one third of the height of the columns is concealed. The capitals of the columns of the exedra carry moulded stilt blocks which, in turn, carry architraves from which the half dome springs. This half dome is perhaps late, like the dome within. The capitals of all the columns and the caps of the piers (Ill. 183) are all of a foliate type treated in the half plastic, half colouristic technique which characterizes so much of the sixth century carving of Northern Syria. All of them are perfectly preserved, never having been exposed to the weather. Some of the capitals are of the wind-blown variety. In the angles above the L shaped piers are rectangular moulded brackets like those in the angles of the octagon at Ẹal'at Sim'ân. Indeed, one finds a singular resemblance between the details of this building and those of Saint Simeon's great church. It is probable that the Aleppo "Cathedral is only a little later, let us say, half a century.

CLASS 3.

Chapels

There are very few of the smaller ecclesiastic buildings of Northeastern Syria that are worthy of mention. The chapel at Tellûn,³¹⁹ near the western edge of the district, and within reach of the limestone country, is an oblong, undivided structure in this material with mouldings that reproduce those of the architecture of the western hills. In the small fortress at il-Habbât,³²⁰ dated 556, is a little chapel of basalt, planned like one of the baptisteries of Northern Syria, that has a projecting apse. Its date is presumably the date of the fortress. At il-Anderîn one finds among the numerous churches, an undivided chapel³²¹ with side chambers projecting like wings on either side of a semicircular apse which enhances the entire width of the nave.

³¹⁹ P. II, B. p. 95, Ill. 111.

³²⁰ P. II, B. p. 102, Ill. 119.

³²¹ P. II, B. p. 56, Ill. 49.

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CHAPTER VI

GENERAL SURVEY: 1. COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS: 2. CONSTRUCTION:
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THE first part of this volume has taken up the study of the early churches of Syria in a more or less chronological order, century by century. In the foregoing historical review, a large number of examples has been cited and an attempt has been made to introduce every building, within the regions delimited, which could lay the smallest claim to architectural or chronological importance. This treatment has involved the presentation of a large body of monuments; and it may be, that as a result, certain features common to many of the churches, and certain contrasts between them, have been lost sight of, or,

at least, may not have been sufficiently emphasized. Moreover, there are certain accessories of the churches and certain details which have lost some of their significance by being treated separately, in different buildings, and in a disconnected manner. In the second part, of which the present chapter is the beginning, an attempt is made to present a general survey of the monuments, paying less attention to chronology, but still observing geographical distributions. Special study is also given to accessories exterior and interior, to details structural and ornamental, and to the information that is to be derived from the inscriptions.

1. COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS

ALL the churches of Syria have certain things in common; all are oriented with more or less precision, having the sanctuary to the east,³²² all have the two main divisions of a nave and a sanctuary, or *presbyterium*, and many, even among the earliest, have chambers, one on either side of the sanctuary, to which the names of *prothesis* and *diaconicon* have been given. The prothesis was the room in which the priest and the deacon performed the preparation and preliminary oblation before the litany. The diaconicon fulfilled the office of sacristy in European churches. Here the sacred vessels were kept, and here the clergy vested. There seems to have been no rule as to which side of the presbyterium these chambers should occupy; but, since one of them usually has a larger entrance than the other, and often has a doorway in the outer wall, it seems most natural, from the nature of its office, to identify this chamber as the prothesis. In Syrian churches this chamber is usually on the south side. The sanctuary was of two forms, one a semi-circular apse, the other a rectangular apartment; the first was, of course, usually covered by a half dome; the second had, in most cases, a lean-to roof of wood, though slabs of stone were used for the covering of

many smaller rectangular sanctuaries. The opening between the nave and the sanctuary, whether this be an apse or a rectangular apartment, is a broad arch which we may call the chancel arch. The side chambers, with three exceptions,³²³ always open upon the nave; occasionally one, rarely both of them,³²⁴ was connected with the sanctuary by a narrow doorway. This is usually the diaconicon. The opening between the diaconicon and the nave is almost invariably a square-headed doorway with a stop for a door, opening inward, while an arch, not capable of being closed, is often substituted for the practicable doorway between the nave and the prothesis. Beyond these general features which are chiefly matters of ground plan, and these minor details, there is little in common between the typical churches of the North and South of Syria.

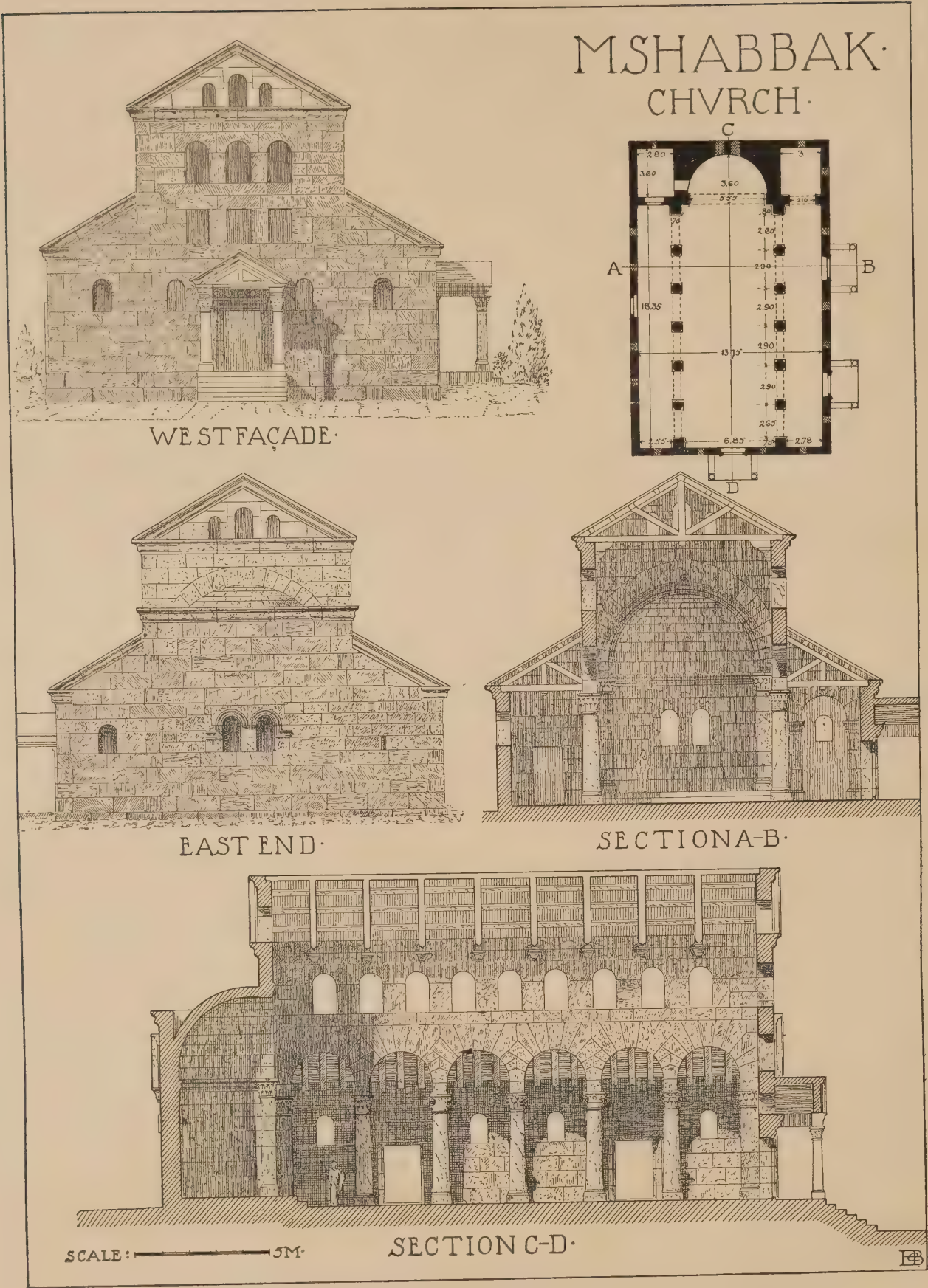
Northern Syria

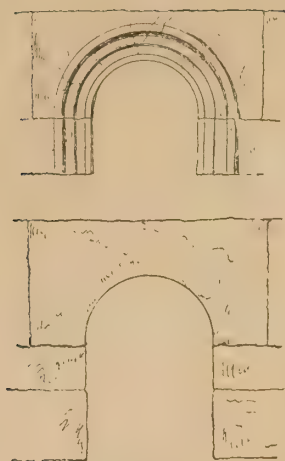
The typical church of Northern Syria is the basilica, as we know it in Latin countries, with a longitudinal system of supports which carry architraves or arches for the support of an upper storey of lights, — a true clearstorey (*Ill.* 184). The side walls are only one storey high. The central nave, or the main aisle of

³²² The fifth (?) century church at Ba'albek was an exception to this rule. (Cf. p. 182 note 327).

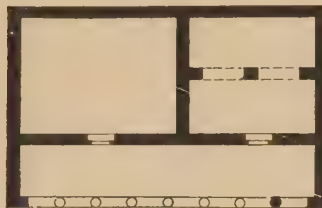
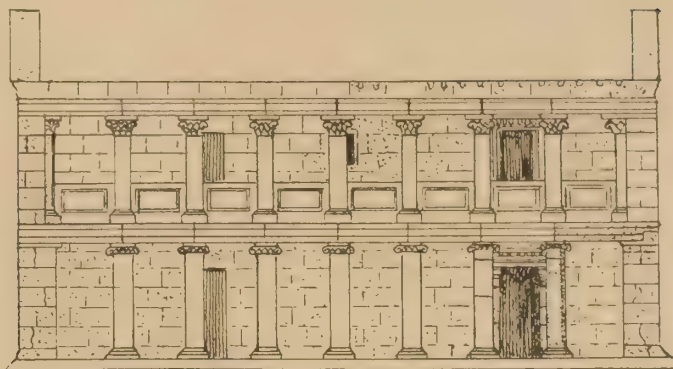
³²³ The church at Northern Dâna (*Ill.* 191-H), the chapel at il-Anderîn (*Ill.* 191-G) and the church at Umm it-Tuwêneh (*P.* II, v. *Ill.* 6).

³²⁴ There is a group of churches, mostly of the sixth century, in the 'Alâ which for some liturgical reason, had lateral openings connecting both chambers with the space directly in front of the apse (p. 164).





Ill. 185.
Arcuated lintels.



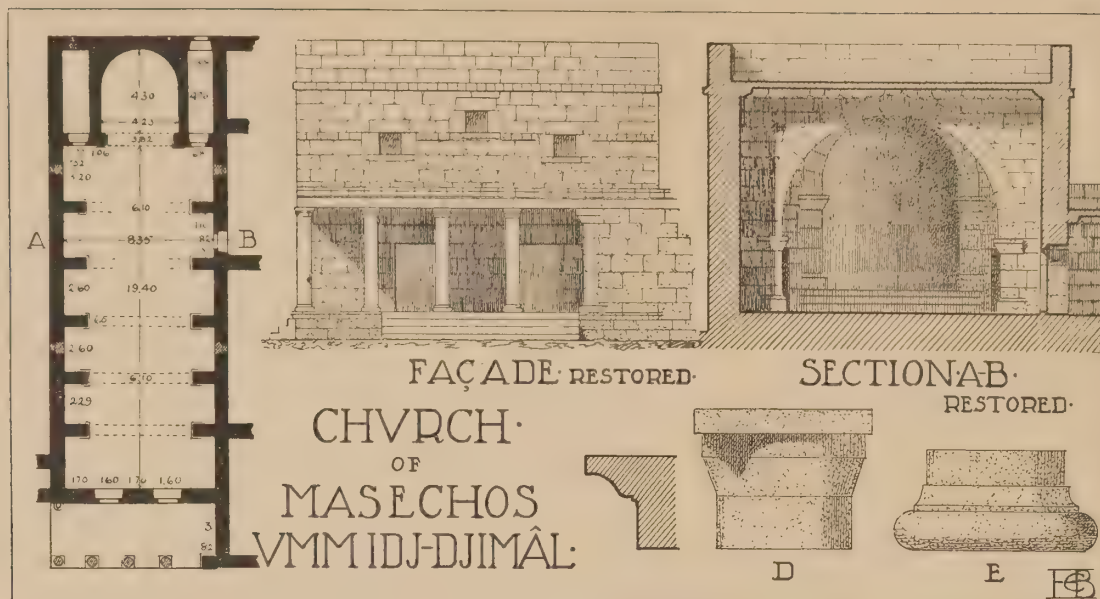
Ill. 186. *Benâbil.*
House, plan and elevation.

the church, was covered with a double pitched roof of timber; the side aisles had lean-to roofs pitched from the side walls to the level of the clearstorey windows. If the sanctuary was of apsidal form, its curve was usually concealed on the exterior by a straight wall that formed also the east wall of the side chambers; but in a number of cases, as in two of the earliest churches with definite dates, the curved wall is to be seen between the rectangular walls of the chambers which flank the apse. The walls of one of these chambers were occasionally carried up above the roof of the side aisle to form a low tower; and in a few cases both chambers were so treated. The main entrances to the earlier churches were usually two in the south aisle, or sometimes in the north aisle if the location of the church necessitated them, and occasionally in both aisles. The western portal was not indispensable in the earlier churches, as several dated examples attest, but it became invariable during the sixth century. A two-columned porch for each portal or a continuous colonnade along the wall seem to have been regular features of even the earliest churches of Northern Syria. The churches with western portals were generally provided with a porch or narthex extending across the whole façade. The narthex, in its simplest form, consisted of six monolithic piers with architraves which carried a wooden roof. In other examples the ends of the narthex were closed with walls which were returned toward each other. The space between the ends was occupied by piers or columns with wide intercolumniation. Windows were placed in the clearstorey, in the west façade and usually in the side walls. They are of two forms, rectangular and arched; but the arches of these windows are

Early Churches in Syria.

arched only in form, for they are almost invariably lintels cut to a semicircle above the opening and so forming what is called an arcuated lintel (Ill. 185). This form of window head is one of the characteristic details of the architecture of Northern Syria. In the apse a single window is often found and there are some examples where coupled openings were used. If the curve of the apse is visible, there are at times three or five windows in it; and then again there are examples where there are no windows. In the west end the lower storey is usually blank in the earlier churches, but there are often two storeys of openings below the gable, which was pierced with three small windows. Mouldings were not profusely used in the earlier churches, being confined on the exterior to pier-caps and the archivolt of the chancel arch. On the outside, the only ornament consisted of the crowning moulding of the walls and the frame mouldings of the portals, while on many of the older churches, even the lintels and jambs of the portals were entirely bare. As church architecture advanced, however, mouldings were extensively employed for base courses, string courses and for all arches and other openings.

Besides the basilical church of the North, there was a smaller building, a sort of chapel, which served the purpose of religious worship. This was an oblong building with or without an apse. It had no system of interior supports. The side walls were relatively higher than in the basilicas and carried a simple roof of timbers with a gable at each end. A colonnade usually extended along the side where the doorways were. This is the simplest form of church edifice in Northern Syria (Ill. 79), and is substantially like the private houses of the country with the interior walls



III. 187.

removed, a sanctuary added at one end, and the two storey colonnade along the side reduced to a single storey (*Ill.* 186).

SOUTHERN SYRIA

The most characteristic churches of Southern Syria are of two types, both of which differ essentially from the churches of other parts of the Christian world in that the longitudinal system of interior supports, the clearstorey and the wooden roofs are replaced by a transverse system of arches and a flat roof of stone which covers the entire building. One of these types (*Ill.* 187), which appears to be the earlier, consists of a long nave spanned by transverse arches 2 to 3 metres apart and a sanctuary with side chambers in two storeys, or an apse which often embraces almost the entire width of the nave. The arches spring from piers engaged with the side walls. This nave is essentially like the long, narrow halls of Roman public buildings of the second century in Southern Syria, such as are still to be seen on the south side of the Kaïsariyeh in Shaḡḡā (*Ill.* 4-A), which itself was converted into a church at an early period. The side walls of these buildings are carried up to the level of crown of the transverse arches. The spandrels are built up to the same level and a roof of slabs was laid from one arch to the other. This was covered with beaten clay. These buildings were entered from the front and the side, although there are only a few examples of western portals.

The other type, which is rarer, and confined to the mountains of the Ḥaurân, is of basilical plan, not a basilica as it is generally understood, but a basilica of the kind found in the Ḥaurân, and derived from

buildings like the well known Roman basilica of the second or third century at Shaḡḡā (p. 16). Here the three-aisled plan is combined with the transverse arch system. A broad, high arch carried on piers, spans the central aisle, and narrow arches, in two storeys, span the side aisles and galleries, the arches of the gallery reaching up to the crown level of the main arch. The side and the end walls are of equal height with the interior arches, and a flat roof of stone slabs covered the entire building (*Ill.* 20). The apse in some of these churches protrudes beyond the east wall. It is occasionally not semicircular, but in the form of an ellipse, the major axis of which is parallel to the east wall of the church. A tower is often attached to the west end of one of the side aisles. This tower contains a stair giving access to the gallery and to the roof which required constant attention. The portals were generally three in the west end, one for each aisle; there is also sometimes an entrance on one side. The windows are small and insignificant; they are placed in the apse and in the galleries. A narthex is often found in Southern Syria, and a colonnade along the side of the church is not infrequent. Mouldings and other forms of decoration are rare, except when taken from the ruins of more ancient buildings. Much of the ornament was executed in stucco.

NORTHEASTERN SYRIA

The remains of ancient architecture in Northeastern Syria are not well preserved, owing to the poor construction in which clay-mortar and mud-brick were prominent elements; but the ruins, in many cases, have not been disturbed and lie as they fell, so that from the heaps of fallen walls, piers and arches and

from the mounds of clay, the plan and superstructure of the buildings can be restored with a considerable degree of accuracy. In this region appears the apse of horseshoe plan and a group of churches of central plan, using the dome and perhaps the Sassanian squinch. But, for the most part, the churches are of the basilical plan, with apse and side chambers, having originally had wooden roofs; in some of them the curve of the apse shows between the walls of the side chambers. In certain cases in which the apse protrudes entirely free, it is enclosed in walls that form three or more sides of a polygon. Piers are generally substituted for columns in the longitudinal system of the interior arcades, though columns and architraves, and columns with arches, were not unknown. A large transverse arch is frequently thrown across the main aisle at the westernmost bay. This is sometimes reinforced by smaller arches over the side aisles. The narthex is generally a triple-arched structure. There were occasionally western towers. While the basis of the architecture is still the Hellenistic basilica of North Syria, there is evidence of Oriental influence from the Persian

and Mesopotamian regions to the northeast and east which tended to modify the style and to introduce distinctive features.

It is interesting to note, as the church architecture of these different regions of Syria develops, that there is a tendency to borrow each from the other. The North borrowed less than the South, and yet we find transverse arches, though not for the support of a flat roof, in one, at least, of the later churches of Northern Syria, namely the church of Ruwêḥā,³²⁵ and roofs of stone slabs introduced above the side aisles of two or three Northern churches, the best example being in the fine church of Ḳalb Lauzeh.³²⁶ In Southern Syria the longitudinal system of supports became quite common; occasionally a clearstorey was introduced, but, in the most common usage of the longitudinal system of arches, the side walls were high, the side aisles narrow and roofed with stone slabs, and the central aisle wide and roofed, when the span was too great for a flat roof of slabs, with a double pitched timber roof, rising immediately from the flat aisle roofs and leaving no space for a clearstorey.

2. CONSTRUCTION

STONEMASONRY

IF there is a strong contrast between the architectural forms of the churches of the North and those of the Northeast and South, the contrast between them in matters of construction is still stronger. The churches of the North are built of a beautiful white limestone laid dry. This stone is easily quarried and lends itself to carving. The churches of the South are constructed of black basalt, the hardest stone ever employed in building on a large scale. The churches of the Northeast were built of basalt and of mud-brick. But within the three regions there are decided differences of construction. In many of the earlier churches of the North finely dressed, quadrated stone was employed, not only for the construction of the east end, — the apse and its flanking chambers, — but also for the columns and arches of the nave and for the jambs and lintels of the portals. The shafts of the interior colonnades, as well as the jambs and lintels of the portals, are monoliths, and the half domes of the apses are marvels of the stone cutter's art. The voussoirs of the arches are long, extending unequally into the spandrils. The other walls, in many of these earlier churches, were built of small stones of irregular shape, dressed only on the outer face. These walls are double faced, averaging 72 cm. thick, and often present

the appearance of polygonal masonry (*Ill.* 188-A). In all the later churches, and in some of the earlier ones, large quadrated blocks, highly finished and in courses averaging 55 cm. high and of the same thickness, were used in the construction of all the walls.

In Southern Syria, where basalt was the only building material available, large blocks of dressed stone were rarely used throughout, except for buildings of unusual magnificence, like the Cathedral of Boṣrā, and then in double faced walls. Quadrated blocks of well finished stone were often used in the curved wall of the apse, and invariably for the construction of piers and arches, for the framing-stones of the portals and the closely fitted roofing slabs. The voussoirs of the arches are very short, being often wider than they are high, and the line of the extrados always follows the curve of the intrados. The great outer walls and the spandrils of the arches were built of small stones, not smoothed, but cut to a rectangular face and laid in courses. Each stone formed a wedge in the wall, the walls being double faced and 80 cm. to 1 m. thick. The spaces between the wedges were filled with broken stone and clay, and the bonding stones were laid through the thickness of the walls at regular intervals (*Ill.* 189). Each bonding stone had slightly concave sides and projected 3 to 4 cm. from the exterior wall

³²⁵ Cf. p. 145.

³²⁶ Cf. p. 72.



A. *Refâdeh. House of polygonal masonry.*



B. *Umm idj-Djimâl. Church of Julianos, apse from the Southeast.*
Ill. 188. Masonry.

surface. Another common method of bonding is shown in (III. 188-B), where every fourth or fifth course is composed entirely of narrow bonding stones. The half dome of the apse in Southern churches seems to have been invariably of concrete.

The materials used in Northeastern Syria were basalt, limestone, gypsum and sun-baked brick, one material or the other preponderating according to the locality. The churches in which limestone appears are not numerous, and it is generally used together with basalt, the light stone being used for the exterior walls, and the dark stone for the interior supports and arches. The construction of the churches in the region of the Euphrates, where gypsum was the only material, does not differ from that of the limestone churches of the North. Where basalt was the chief material the walls were built in the manner of walls in Southern Syria, of a poorer or better quality, finished stone being employed only for piers and arches, doors and window frames. In localities in which the basalt was quarried with difficulty, and in which mud-brick was largely used, only the lower courses of walls, the interior supports and arches, and the door-frames, were of basalt. In several instances the entire east end, which is still standing, was of basalt. In all these churches the interior supports and arches, and the door-frames, are lying in the ruins. On the whole, the arches were better than those of Southern Syria, being of larger voussoirs. The lintels of the church portals are often of huge dimensions, reaching a length of 4.30 m. The half domes were either of rubble set in mortar or of mud-brick. The window openings were large and were usually arched, being composed of small voussoirs. Mouldings, though rare, were more commonly employed in these basalt churches than in those of the South. Apsal arches were often moulded, as were also the caps of piers; but these mouldings were usually of right-lined profile. Some of the great lintels have shallow mouldings; but the ornament is confined, for the most part, to elaborate surface carving of little depth.

In all three regions very little lime-mortar was used in wall building, and vaults, except in the form of domes and half domes, were almost unknown. In Northern Syria lime-mortar was never used in the masonry, and the half dome of stone was the only kind of vault commonly employed. The tunnel vault of dry masonry occasionally appears as an extension of a half dome, but no other form of vault was used. In the Northeast, clay is almost invariably used in place of lime-mortar, the half dome is common, the



III. 189.

dome rare, and the tunnel vault rarer. All these were generally built of rubble set in clay, or else of mud-brick. In the South, very little lime-mortar was used in walls; but the half domes, and the few examples of domes, were built of volcanic scoriac and cement, as was also the single example of a tunnel vault that has been found in a church. In Southern Syria, roofs of flat slabs of stone almost universally took the place of tunnel vaults in providing a durable covering.

STUCCO AND PLASTER

It is not definitely known that the unsightly wall surfaces were hidden from view. At Umm idj-Djimāl where the climate is milder and the rainfall lighter than in other parts of Syria, I found that the walls, not only of the churches, but of all kinds of buildings, were covered with a thick stucco, two coats on the exterior and three on the interior. The first coat was of coarse mortar mixed with broken stone and pottery, filling up all the interstices; upon this was laid a somewhat finer coat which, on the exterior, was final. On the interior, this coat was scratched to receive a third coating of exceedingly fine plaster which was made smooth and waxed for the application of colour. Carved mouldings are rarely found in the churches of the South, but, where they occur, the second or third coat of plaster was laid over them in a very thin layer, and it was also applied even to the smooth surface of the dressed stones, presumably to bring all the surfaces to one colour and texture. Plaster mouldings too, were used in the South, and designs in low relief were wrought in plaster upon the exterior and interior wall surfaces. The walls built of irregularly shaped stones in the North were not unsightly, for the outer surface was dressed to a smooth face. Whether this surface was stuccoed or not, I am unable to say. Certain it is that the interior surfaces of these walls were coated with plaster.

3. ORIENTATION

IT has already been stated that practically all the churches in Syria were oriented with the sanctuary toward the east.³²⁷ This is quite true of churches early and late; but the degrees of accuracy, when tested by the compass, show comparatively wide variations; for the longer axes of the large number of churches, that have been oriented by means of a surveying instrument, have been found to vary as much as twelve degrees on the south side of a line drawn at right angles to the true north;³²⁸ though there is only one case among the tested examples of deflection on the north side of that line.³²⁹ In a large number of churches the diagonal of the nave, drawn from the southwest to the northeast angle is at right angles to the true north line; this, of course, may be accidental, for it is doubtful if the ancients had accurate instruments for this work, and variations from any celestial system of orientation during fifteen hundred years are quite possible. Since many of the early churches are oriented with greater accuracy, their major axes lying more nearly due east, and since many of the later ones conform to an orientation which is about east by south; or, in other words, since the extremes in orien-

tation appear to coincide with the extremes in date, it seems not impossible that the matter of orientation might be very useful in helping to solve problems of dates for the undated churches. Within limits this is found to be true, but the erection of late buildings upon old foundations was practiced with sufficient frequency to bring a large element of doubt into such a basis for determining dates. The discovery of slight variations in orientation between churches of the same period suggested that the sun, rather than the pole-star, might have been used for observation, and that the discrepancies might represent observations made at different seasons of the year. But two churches erected within seventeen years of each other by the same architect and, showing a difference of five degrees in their orientation, were both completed in the month of August. These two churches are of nearly equal dimensions, and probably required about the same length of time for their construction; yet we have no proof that their plans were not laid out and their orientation determined at different seasons of the year. In all these cases, the inscriptions fall just short of giving us information that might lead to interesting hypotheses.

4. UNITS AND RATIOS

WHEN M. de Vogüé published the text of his great work on the architecture of Central Syria, he opened the discussion of two subjects which are of undoubted importance to Syrian archeology, namely the subject of units of linear measurement, and that of ratios of proportion, employed in the buildings of that country.³³⁰ With a certain amount of knowledge at our disposal concerning the various units of measurement employed by the ancients at different periods and in different parts of the world,³³¹ it should not be difficult to discover the particular unit or units, employed in the buildings of Syria; for certain measurements, like the width and height of doorways, the length of roofing slabs, and the diameter of columns, are likely to be of standard dimensions, in even numbers, or simple fractions, of the units employed. M. de Vogüé, falling back upon the researches of M. Viollet-le-Duc and others, accepted,

as a unit of linear measurement, the Greek foot of 308 mm., and was satisfied that all the buildings which he measured, with the exception of the temple at Si^c, covering a period of more than 500 years, were built according to that unit. With the increase in the number of measured buildings, it was found necessary to abandon the theory propounded by M. de Vogüé. It became plain that no less than three metrical units were employed during the period when architecture flourished in Syria. The unit employed during the earlier part of that period, the first, second and third centuries, is of no great importance for our study of the churches; but it is quite evident that two units were employed during the Christian period, from the fourth to the seventh century. It was found, for instance, that the common thickness of early walls was .55 m. or 70 m. or .84 m., and that hundreds of doorways were 1. 10 m. wide and 2. 20 to 2.24 m. high;

³²⁷ The altar of the "Great Church" at Antioch was turned toward the west instead of toward the east (Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie et du liturgie*, III, "Antioche", col. 2374, n. 18), and the early church, probably dating from the beginning of the fifth century, in the ruins at Ba'albek was oriented with its sanctuary at the west end (The Wiegand, *Ba'albek*, II, p. 130 f.).

³²⁸ Cf. Map of Umm idj-Djimal (*P.* II, A. Map. No. 1).

³²⁹ Cf. Map. of Serdjillā (*P.* II, B. p. 115).

³³⁰ *S. C.* p. 25.

³³¹ See Müller's *Handbuch der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, 1892, Vol. I, p. 835 f.

this suggested the use of the old royal cubit of Babylonia of 555 mm. which is known to have survived in nearer Asia well down into the Christian era. The walls of cut stone were undoubtedly intended to be a cubit thick, the double faced walls of undressed stone, or of rubble, a cubit and a quarter or a cubit and a half in thickness, the doorways two cubits wide and four cubits high. It is believed that, about the year 500, the principal linear unit throughout the Eastern Empire was changed to the foot of 370 mm. or two thirds of the old cubit.³³² This change would have had little effect upon the dimensions of doorways; for they remained the same, being three feet wide and six feet high under the change. No change whatever is noticeable in the thickness of walls of cut stone which remains about .555 m.; but some of the more roughly built walls of the later period measure about 75 m., or two feet in thickness. The old cubit and the new foot appear not to have been combined in standard dimensions; for such measurements as .92 m. a cubit and a foot, or 1.29 m. a cubit and two feet, are not commonly found. The change is perhaps more noticeable in larger measurements in which proportions are involved.

The questions of ratios and proportions, of significant or symbolic numbers and of modules are much more difficult than that of units of measurements. After a metrical unit has been determined, it is easier to take up the questions of proportions, numbers, moduli etc. although proportions by themselves may be observed and studied as well according to one system of measurements as another. M. de Vogüé, with the standard unit upon which he fixed, was convinced that he had found numbers, relations arithmetical and geometrical, arrangements of triangles and rectangles, and a system of modules which were all governed by prescribed laws, and many of which had symbolic or mystic significance. These he applied to buildings of all kinds, Pagan and Christian, and some of the schemes of ground plans and of elevations which he presented in graphic formulae are exceedingly interesting. But when one attempts to apply the same modules and geometrical laws to a hundred or more churches, one finds them less and less applicable as the number of monuments increases. I am not sure that it would not be possible to discover a scheme of proportions that would apply to the majority of any comparatively small number of monuments, such as M. de Vogüé had as a basis for his theory; but it is far more dif-

ficult when the number of monuments is multiplied by five or by ten. The graphical geometric scheme of circles, angles and numbers for the plan of Saint Simeon's church at ẖal'at Sim'ân, presented in *La Syrie Centrale*,³³³ shows an interesting arrangement of round numbers on a scale of the Greek foot of 308 mm., but an equally significant scheme can be drawn by using the old cubit of 555 mm. According to the former scheme, a circle struck from the centre of the sacred column and inscribed outside the great octagon will measure 30.80 m., or 100 Greek feet in diameter; but according to the new scheme, a smaller circle inscribed *within* the octagon will measure exactly 50 cubits of 555 mm., and the sides of the octagon will average 11.10 m. or 20 cubits. In the old scheme, the circle tangent to the ends of the basilicas, excluding that to the east, has a radius of 132 Greek feet; according to the new scheme, the same radius is 75 cubits. The old scheme gives the circle inscribed outside the angle apses a radius of 75 Greek feet; the new scheme inscribes a circle of 40 cubits inside the apses. Some of the other circles in the old scheme have no significance because the building is not symmetrical as it is shown in M. de Vogüé's plan. The discovery that the eastern basilica is not at right angles with the others throws out the schematic treatment of the angles of the buildings, as presented in the geometric plan. In the publications of the American Expedition,³³⁴ I have attempted to show that there was a more or less constant relation between the length and breadth of the basilicas which I had measured, that these relations were simple, and that they varied from century to century. For instance, it was evident that a large proportion of the naves of churches which were believed to belong to the fourth century show a ratio of length to breadth on the inside which is that of 3 to 2, that the same comparison in churches of the fifth century shows the proportion of 4 : 3, with an exterior proportion of 3 : 2, and that the churches of the sixth century, while maintaining the proportion of 3 : 2 over all, observed no constant rule for interior proportions. After measuring carefully a far greater number of churches it is clear to me that these proportions were observed only within limits. In general the proportions of early churches are about 3 : 2 inside, and those of the later churches have approximately the proportion of 4 : 3, which is only another way of saying that the early churches are usually narrower in proportion than the later ones.

³³² Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 859; *Hermes*, III, p. 429 f.

³³³ *Texte* p. 147.

³³⁴ *A.* II, p. 35.

5. DESIGN

IN the matter of design the churches in the different parts of Syria were so differently treated that it is impossible to discuss the subject as applying to the churches of the country as a whole, and difficult to find grounds for comparison except in a negative way. The churches of Southern Syria, on the whole, show no attempt whatever at exterior design; the proportions of the façades and the side walls were determined wholly by the heavy and difficult stone construction of the interior, and have neither grace nor distinction, not even the impressiveness that often accompanies large masses. The lack of gables and clearstoreys deprives the exteriors of all variety. The relation of voids to solids was not studied with a view to beauty of effect, the doorways are merely openings for entrance and exit, the windows simply holes for light. In churches in which arched or colonnades porches or narthexes appear, these features were added as protuberances for the protection of the entrances, their proportions were not studied in relation to those of the rest of the building, their details are crude and plain, and they seldom improve the appearance of the structure. The interiors manifest somewhat more of a desire for beauty of effect on the part of the builders, though here the effects may have been secured by accident rather than by intelligent design. In the churches that have the transverse system of supports for a roof of stone, the series of broad arches rising one behind the other, and mounting into the dim light of the ceiling, are dignified and impressive. The proportion of the supports of these great arches to the arches themselves offered an opportunity for the exercise of artistic judgment which was often taken advantage of, and the proportion of the narrow chancel arch, with its higher supports, to the great arches and their low piers is often harmonious and pleasing. In the churches with the longitudinal system, the relation is well proportioned, the arcades of the nave are spacious and impressive, and in several churches in which columns were used, the whole interior effect is one of lightness and of graceful proportions. But, aside from these considerations of interior proportions, the churches of the South can not be said to be illustrations of artistic design.

The churches of the North, on the other hand, show that their architects were much concerned with notions of design, and whether they were planned according to some rule for proportions, or to conform to some mystical combination of numbers, or were simply designed with a view to beauty of effect, these churches

are very plainly the result of artistic effort. Not all these churches, by any means, if they were restored to their original estate, would stand the test of serious, modern artistic criticism. The important point is not whether we think them beautiful or not, but whether their builders were consciously and intelligently striving to make them beautiful, and to this question there can be but one answer. More than any other buildings in Christendom, between the third century and the twelfth, these churches illustrate a conscious effort to produce a beautiful exterior effect, and the interiors naturally take care of themselves. Every item in the artistic programme received particular attention, proportions, harmony of lines, the relations of voids to solids, the modelling of projections, and their harmonious relation to the whole, and the treatment of plastic ornament, to say nothing of the surface textures and the combinations of materials of different colour and quality which are seen in a few churches. The „Lamp of Truth” was kept trimmed and burning by these architects, for the exterior always tells the story of the interior of a building, and the ornament grows simply out of the construction. It does not seem possible that the proportions of the exteriors could have been designed according to rules, or by mystic combinations of numbers in the use of moduli, for the realization of the intent of the designers is achieved by innumerable means. The proportions of the interior depended upon the dimensions and arrangement of a number of features, such as the ground plan, the heights of the storeys, the width of the arches and the proportions of the apse opening. The middle aisle was approximately equal in width to the two side aisles, and the apse arch was a little narrower than the middle aisle, so that its piers would represent the width of the archivolt at its springing. The columns were in some cases tall and placed near together, in others short and wide apart, making the arches themselves either low and narrow, or wide and high; occasionally the arches were much stilted. In a few churches low piers and very broad, high arches were employed; but in all these different schemes the total width of the arcades remained about the same in proportion to the width of the main aisle. The aisle walls were usually only one course higher than the columns of the interior arcades. The clearstorey varies in height at different periods. Its openings are few or many, large or small, rectangular or arched, according to date, but the proportions were always studied in relation to those of the arcade below it. The apse arch presents a great



A. *Surkanyā. Chapel, exterior from the South.*



B. *Bākirhā. East Church, mouldings along East wall.*
Ill. 190.

variety of proportions, even within limited periods, for the space below the arch itself is about square in some cases and very much higher than a square in others; but it was the rule that the top of the apse arch should be at the level of the top of the clearstorey wall, and that the same cornice should crown both. The proportional relation of the width of the lower storey of the façades to that of the upper storey is not constant even in churches of the same period. In some buildings it is more pleasing than in others. These proportions were determined by the plan and the height of the interior storeys, as were also the proportions of the aisle walls to the walls of the clearstorey. The effects of these exterior proportions were modified by the harmonious treatment of lines. The angles of the slope of the aisle roofs were never the same as those of the gable above, but were always steeper, because they were nearer the eye, and were required to give an impression of compactness and strength, and, in a side view, were to make the transition from the high aisle wall to the lower wall of the clearstorey. The angles of these aisle roofs and those of the high gables were not only never the same, but were seldom exactly alike in two churches. The relation of voids to solids was always carefully studied. In the aisle walls the arrangement of the doors and windows was never perfectly symmetrical; but the spacing of the larger and smaller openings was made with a view to rhythm and balance; the clearstorey was more symmetrically treated as a reiteration of equal light and dark spaces, but the proportion of the voids to the solids presented an endless variety. The fenestration of the west façades also offered much variety of treatment. Here storeys of rectangular openings often alternated with round-headed openings; in one church the windows are grouped in the middle and are separated

by columns, in another the windows are equally spaced but vary symmetrically in size, having the larger opening in the middle; even the gable ends show openings of various forms and spacings. All projections, such as porticoes, narthexes and distyle porches, were modelled strictly in harmonious relation to the building behind them. The height of the piers or columns with their architraves, their distance from the wall and the slope of the roof above them were not gauged by any fixed proportions, or by features already determined, but with a view to appropriate balance with the rest of the building. The application of mouldings played an important role in the design of these Northern churches, and plastic ornament was employed to enhance the beauty of effect; but here again the variety is almost endless. In the interiors, mouldings were used to emphasize the important lines, carved ornament, like capitals, to enrich the supporting members and strengthen the imposts of arches. But in the treatment of pier-caps, either foliage or mouldings could be used, according to the taste of the architect, and both often occur in the same church. Exterior mouldings appear preeminently as crowning features to emphasize lines and to give deep shadows. The crowning mouldings were proportioned to the height of the feature they crowned. Window mouldings were the details with which the Syrian architects best loved to play. To the artist of the day these mouldings were no doubt like music, as difficult perhaps for us to understand as his music would be (*Ill.* 190). In simple measures, repeated over and over again, we see in stone the movement of the chanting of the choir, and in the sweeping curves, now quick, now slow, in the quick turns and sudden returns, in the loops and spirals, the unexpected notes and pauses, we see, and may try to hear, the gay, triumphant music of a high feast day.

CHAPTER VII.

GROUND PLANS AND SUPERSTRUCTURES: I. GROUND PLANS

THAT the form of the church edifice in Syria was not bound by any limited set of rules, during the three centuries of its growth, is shown by the great variety of ground plans which is found among the examples that have survived. The variations were partly the natural growth of development, and of the probable changes in ritual that took place from century to century; but there is sufficient variety to prevent sameness, even among the churches which appear to be of very early date. In reviewing the ground plans of Syrian churches, we may divide the buildings into two large groups: Group I, those of longitudinal or transverse system, and Group II, those of central plan. The first group would embrace, first, the churches and chapels with undivided naves, and, second, all forms of three-aisled basilicas, from those of square outline to the elongated type. Group II would cover, first, the buildings of square outline which embrace a central structure within, whether domed or not; second, those which are wholly or partly polygonal in outline; and, third, those whose outlines describe a part of a circle. It is, of course, understood that the matter of plan determines, to a great extent, the system of roofing; buildings of the first group would have the timber ridge-roof with lean-tos, or shed roofs, for the lower divisions, except in the South where the flat roof of stone or wood occurs; while the covering of the second group varies from the pyramid of four or more sides in timber to the dome of concrete or stone, the lower portions being covered with slabs or provided with vaults, protected by shed roofs of timber.

GROUP I:

To begin with the simplest form of Christian edifice in Syria, one must take the oblong, rectangular chapel with a transverse arch near the east end dividing off a small sanctuary. Such a chapel is one beside the great Roman road, not far west of Bâb il-Hawâ, called Kaṣr il-Mudakhkhin (*Ill.* 191-A). In churches of Southern Syria this type is found with a series of transverse arches, the chancel arch being narrower, and its sup-

ports, consequently, higher than the others, as in the church at ʿAnz (*Ill.* 191-B). This "hall type" of church, without an apse at the east end, not only was derived from the narrow halls of Roman public buildings in this region, but also was undoubtedly used for Pagan sanctuaries, as at Dêr Smêdj³³⁵ and Msêkeh.³³⁶ After this, the simplest form is the undivided nave with a semicircular apse. In Northern Syria this apse is visible on the exterior, as in the chapel on the hill at Kharâb Shems (*Ill.* 191-C). In the South it is sometimes concealed by a straight east wall, as may be seen in the plan of a chapel at Şabḥah (*Ill.* 191-D). In the Southeast Church at Umm idj-Djimâl and in several small chapels, such as the one at Dêr idj-Djūwânî (*Ill.* 191-E), not only does this apse protrude beyond the east wall, but there is a single transverse arch across the nave which takes the place of a truss. A degree more complex are the chapels with a three-fold division of the east end, — a presbytery, almost square, and side chambers, as we find in the Southwest Church at Brâd (*Ill.* 191-F). In most Northern examples these chapels often project a little beyond the walls of the nave, like a rudimentary transept, as, for example, in the chapel at Surḳanyâ.³³⁷ The next step brings us to a nave still undivided, but having an apse and side chambers. In Northern and Northeastern examples, the chambers project at the sides, as in a small chapel at il-Anderîn (*Ill.* 191-G); but in the South, very narrow side chambers seem to have answered the purpose, as we have seen in the Church of Masechos at Umm idj-Djimâl (*Ill.* 187),

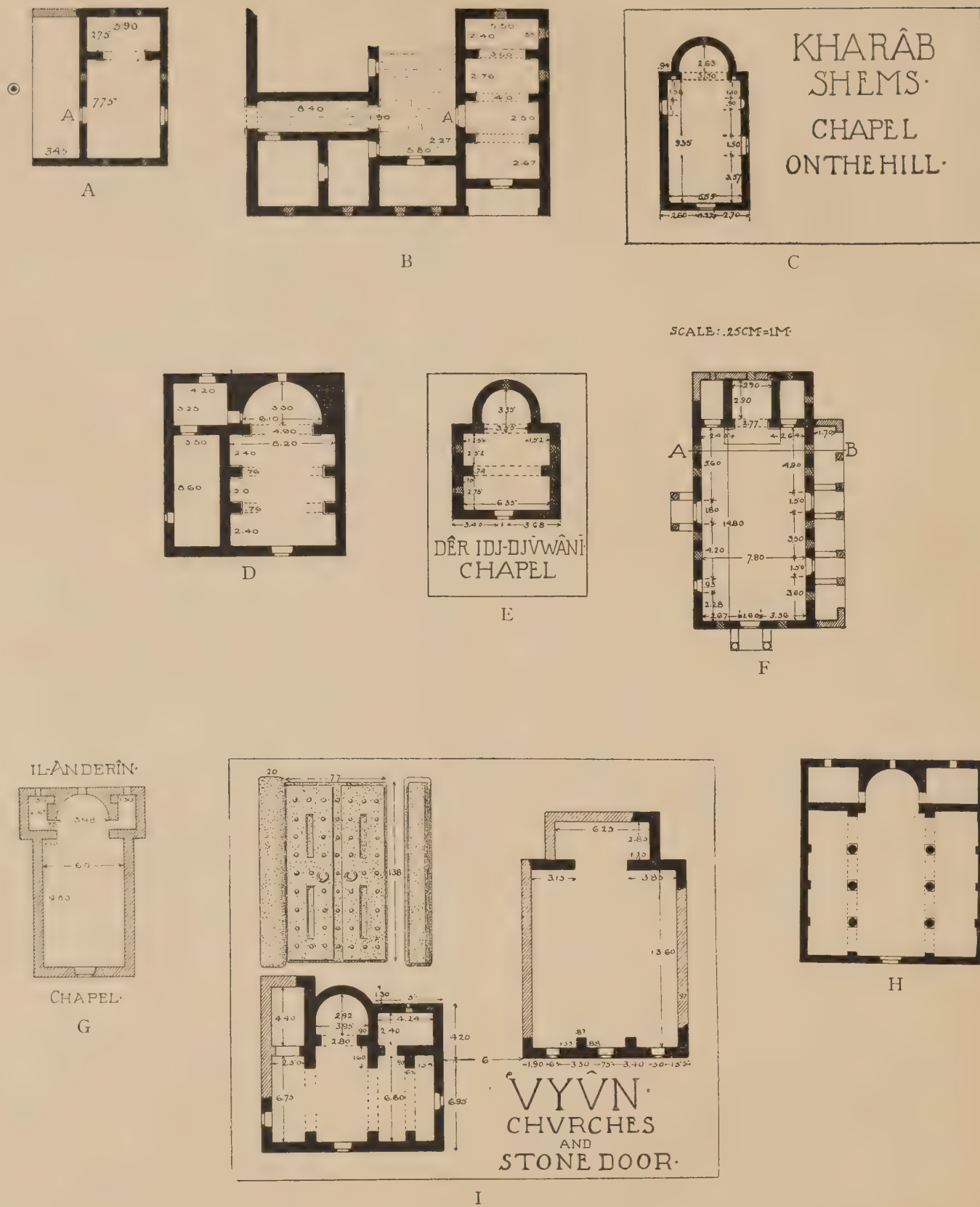
BASILICUS:

Of the three-aisled basilicas there are three quite different plans, two of which are nearly square in general outline: 1. the Northern type, with its apse and side chambers included within the square, leaving a nave wider than it is long, as in the church at Northern Dânâ (*Ill.* 191-H), which, it may be remarked, is the only church in Northern Syria, so far as I have been able to discover, in which there was no direct communication between the side aisles and the side cham-

³³⁵ P. II, A. p. 352, *Ill.* 317.

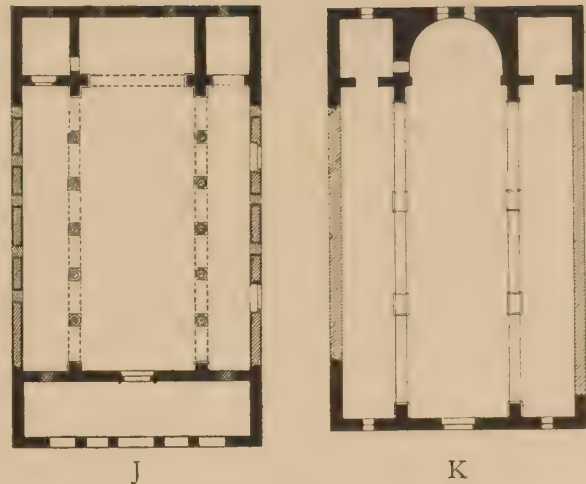
³³⁶ P. II, A. p. 424, *Ill.* 366.

³³⁷ P. II, B. p. 327, *Ill.* 367.



Ill. 191. Plans: A, ʿAnz, Church; B, ʿAnz, Church; C, Kharâb Shems, Chapel; D, Şablah, Church; E, Dêr-idj-Djûwânî, Chapel; F, Brâd, Southwest Church; G, il-Anderîn, Chapel; H, Northern Dâna, Church; I, ʿUyûn, Churches.

bers;³³⁸ 2. the Southern type, with its series of transverse arches and its apse protruding from the square, as, for example, in the church at Ṭafhā (*Ill.* 17); and 3. the true basilica. Diversity of plan in the oblong basilica was produced in several ways; in the nave by using many columns supporting narrow arches, as in the East Church at Bākirhā (*Ill.* 192-J), or few piers with broader arches, as in the church at Djūwānīyeh (*Ill.* 192-K); in the east end, by a curved apse or by a rectangular sanctuary (*Ill.* 192-J). The outer curve of the apse is either concealed by a straight east wall or is shown between the rectangular walls of the side chambers, as an example of which we may cite the East Church at Kōkanāyā (*Ill.* 193-L). Again, the entire apse protrudes beyond the east wall, as in the case of the church at Ẕalb Lauzeh (*Ill.* 193-M), where the east end of the side aisles are enclosed to form the prothesis and diaconicon. The polygonal apse is extremely rare, being found only in Northeastern and Southern Syria.³³⁹ In two churches of Northeastern Syria the apses project beyond the east wall, but are enclosed within a rectangular block of masonry.³⁴⁰ The use of three apses, a broad apse at the end of the central aisle and narrow apses at the ends of the side aisles, occurs in all three regions of Syria, but is very uncommon. The examples are the lost basilica at Suwēda³⁴¹ and the church at Dēr Simdj³⁴² in the South, the „Cathedral” at il-Anderīn³⁴³ and the Martyrion and Basilica “B” at Reṣāfah³⁴⁴ in the Northeast, the great church of Saint Simeon Stylites at Ẕal’at Sim’ān in the North,³⁴⁵ and the Christian basilica built in the ruins of the temple at Ba’albek.³⁴⁶ Of these, the church of Saint Simeon, and perhaps the “Cathedral” at il-Anderīn, are the only ones where the curve of all three apses appears on the exterior of the east end of the church.³⁴⁷ An innovation is to be seen in the plan of the church of the Archangel in



Ill. 192. Plans: J, Bākirhā, East Church, K, Djūwānīyeh, Church.

il-Anderīn (*Ill.* 193-N), where the apse is set back from the line of the east wall of the church and enclosed in a wall which forms three sides of a hexagon. The space between the side chambers and in front of the apse thus becomes a redimentary form of choir. This is really only a further development of M, the plan of the church at Ẕalb Lauzeh. In the churches of Northeastern Syria both side chambers are often connected with the presbytery by narrow doorways, and the transverse arch, already mentioned as spanning the central aisle at the westernmost bay (see N), forms a sort of interior vestibule or narthex.

The narthex in Northern and Southern churches, as we have seen, consisted in its simplest form of an open portico of piers or columns carrying architraves. In a later form the ends are closed by walls which are returned toward each other (*Ill.* 192-J). A few churches have two western towers which suggest a prototype for the Mediaeval façades of Western Europe, and in origin perhaps go back to the very early *hilani*

³³⁸ This church at Northern Dānā, which in so many ways is an exception in Northern Syria, especially if its fifth century date is accepted, belongs in the arrangement of its side chambers with a group of sixth century churches of Northeastern Syria, which seem to constitute a special type. The type, due to some special liturgical necessity, has both side chambers opening laterally, not into the apse proper, but into the space directly in front of it. At Dānā, Umm it-Tuwēneh (*P.* II, B. *Ill.* 6), dated 539/40 A.D., and in the chapel at il-Anderīn (*Ill.* 191-G) there are no doorways opening from the side chambers into the side aisles. In the churches at Nawā, 598/9 A.D. (*Ill.* 171), Der Nawā, 599 A.D. (*Ill.* 112), it-Ṭūbā, 583 A.D. (*Ill.* 175), ir-Ruḥaiyeh, 564 A.D. (*Ill.* 113), Basilica “B”, (p. 163), and the Martyrion at Reṣāfah (*Ill.* 177) there are openings into the side aisles in addition to the lateral openings into the sanctuary. All these churches, with the exception of the church at Dānā, are dated in the sixth century and are located in the general region of the ‘Alā.

³³⁹ Boṣrā (*Ill.* 124), Zo’rah (*Ill.* 122), Dēr Simdj (*Ill.* 118), Reṣāfah (*Ill.* 177), Basilica “B” at Reṣāfah, Dēr Termānīn (de Vogüé, *La Syrie Centrale*, Pl. 130), Church of the Archangel at il-Anderīn (*Ill.* 193-N), Basilica at Ba’albek, (Wiegand, *Ba’albek*, II, Abb. 190).

³⁴⁰ Basilica “B” (Cf. p. 163) and the Martyrion (*Ill.* 177) at Reṣāfah.

³⁴¹ de Vogüé, op. cit., Pl. 19.

³⁴² Cf. p. 119; an inscription on the lintel of the church of Busr il-Ḥarīrī (Wadd. 2477) uses the word apse in the plural.

³⁴³ Cf. p. 159.

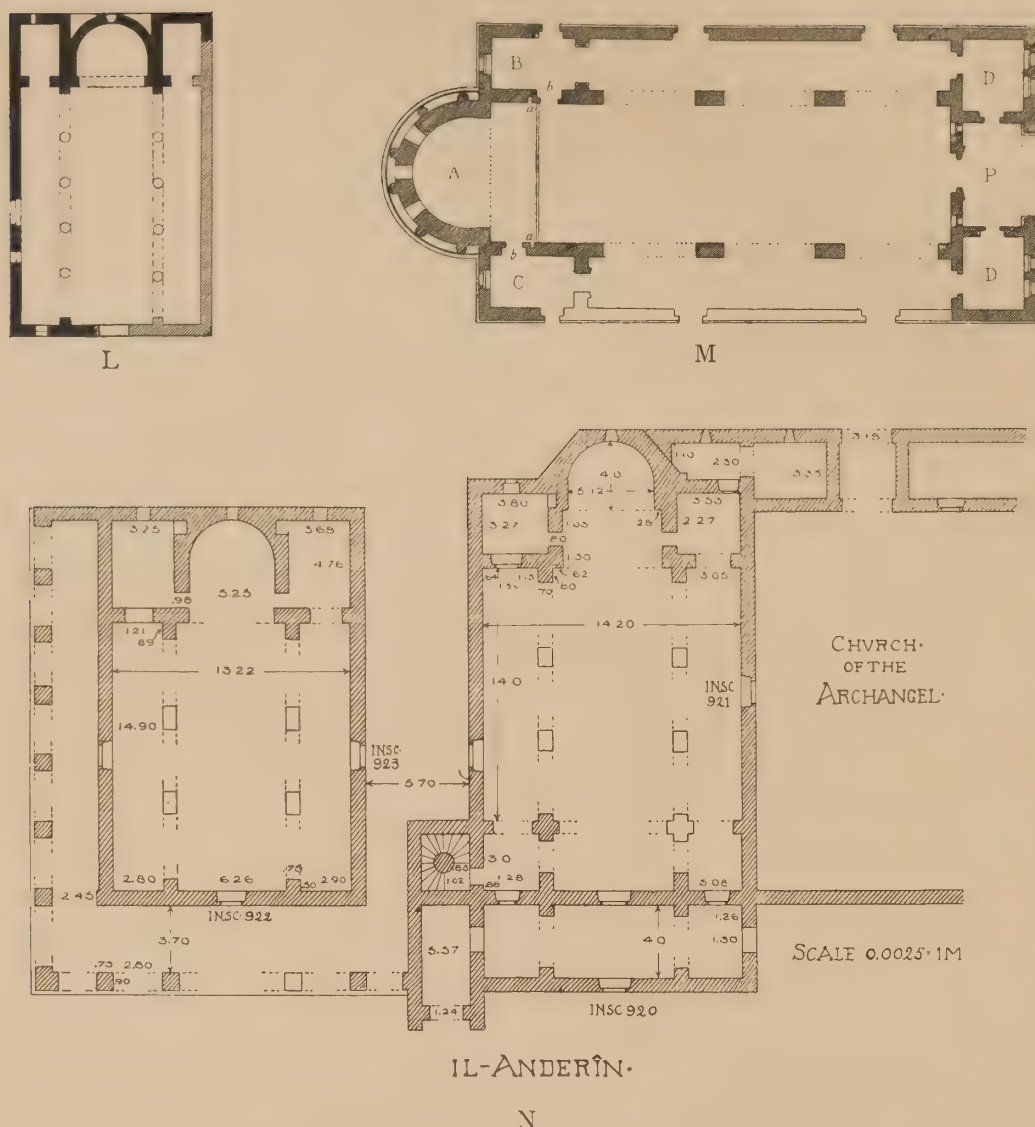
³⁴⁴ Cf. p. 163.

³⁴⁵ Cf. p. 99.

³⁴⁶ Th. Wiegand, *Ba’albek*, II, Tafel 69.

³⁴⁷ H. W. Beyer, *Der Syrische Kirchenbau*, p. 167, discusses the prototypes and parallels for this treatment of the east end. Outside of Syria before the seventh century the use of the three apses was limited to the Sinai region in Palestine. In three churches as Esbeita and a church at El Anja there are three apses, which, however, do not project on the exterior (C. L. Woolley, “The Wilderness of Zin”, *Palestinian Exploration Fund Annual*, 1914/15, pp. 72–132).

Early Churches in Syria



Ill. 193. Plans: L, *Kökanâyâ, Church*; M, *Ḳalb Lauzeh, Church*; N, *il-Anderîn, Churches of SS. Michael and Gabriel*.

façades of the Hittites in Syria. Certainly the type existed in Syria during the Hellenistic period.³⁴⁸ In the Christian architecture, this towered façade, while appearing in all three regions, was most common in Northeastern Syria.

There is a fourth type of plan, peculiar to the South, which is aisled and hence comes under the head of basilicas, although it is not a regular basilica plan. In churches of this type, two, and sometimes more, longitudinal arches, spanning the distance between the east

and west walls, divide the interior into three, or more, aisles, as in the church at 'Uyûn (Ill. 191-I). At Dêr idj-Djûwânî (Ill. 121) the church is much wider than it is long, and four arches divide the interior into five aisles.

GROUP II:

The buildings which present a square exterior and a central interior plan are not common in the ecclesiastical architecture of Syria, though this form is often found

³⁴⁸ Examples of the towered facade: Northern Syria, Dêr Termânîn (de Vogüé, Pl. 135) Ḳalb Lauzeh (de Vogüé, Pl. 124), "Bizzos" church at Ruwêhâ (Ill. 156); Northeastern Syria, Kerrâtîn (Ill. 169), Ma'râtâ (Ill. 85), ir-Ruḥaiyeh (Ill. 113), I'dâz (Ill. 39), il-Firdjeh (Ill. 173), "Cathedral" at il-Anderîn (Ill. 170), perhaps the church of the Archangel at il-Anderîn (Ill. 193-N) and the Basilica at Reṣâfah (Ill. 174); Southern Syria, Suwêdâ (de Vogüé, Pl. 19), West Church at Umm idj-Djimâl (Ill. 114), il-Kâris (P. II, A. Ill. 302), Lubbên (Ill. 40).

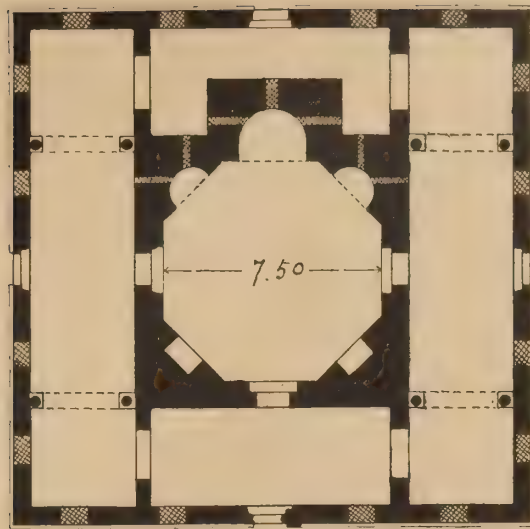
F. Oelmann, *Hilani und Liwanhaus*, *Bonner Jahrbücher*, CXXVII, (1922), pp. 188—236.

G. L. Bell, *Palace and Mosque at Ukhaidir*, p. 122 f;

H. W. Beyer, *Der Syrische Kirchenbau*, pp. 148—153;

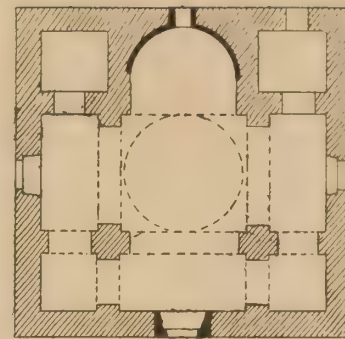
Puchstein, *Die Säule in der Assyrischen Architektur*, Jb. d. K. d. Arch. Inst., 1892, p. 8 f.;

Strzygowski, *Kleinasiens*, p. 55 f., 213 f.; *Die Baukunst der Armenier*, I, p. 399.

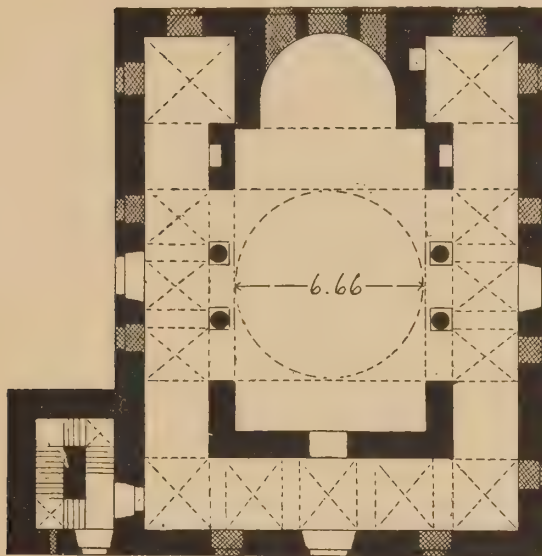


O

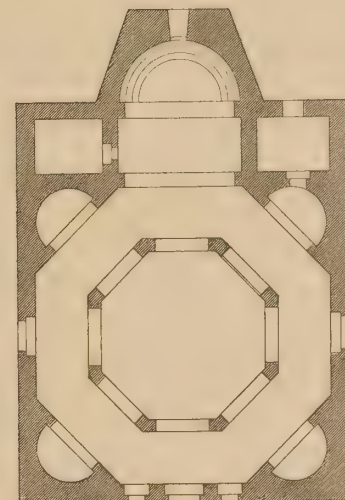
SCALE: O.P.Q. & R. 0.0025=1 M.



P



Q



R

Ill. 194. Plans: O, ʔalʔat Simʔân, Baptistry (after de Vogüé); P, il-Anderîn, Chapel;
Q, Kaşr Ibn Wardân; R, Zorʔah, Church of St. George.

in tomb structures. The plan of the so-called baptistry at ʔalʔat Simʔân (Ill. 194-O) has an interior octagon brought to a square by solid triangles of masonry. Outside of this square is an enclosing wall, provided an aisle about it. A simple example is found in a little church at il-Anderîn, of which little but the foundation walls are now in situ (Ill. 194-P). Within the outer square of this church is another square formed by four arches, one of which is the apse arch; the three other arches are supported by two piers of cruciform plan, which stand opposite the engaged piers which flank the apse or chancel arch. This provides a complete cruciform superstructure within, and yet an oblong nave and side aisles. There were three entrances, one in the west wall and one in each of the side walls.

The plan of the church at Kaşr Ibn Wardân (Ill. 194-Q) is an elaboration of this simple arrangement. This church is described in detail in the Vth chapter; we may note here that the exterior proportions are slightly oblong and that the combination of the three-aisled basilical plan and the central construction crowned with a dome is carried out with remarkable success. In place of the single arches of the North and South, which appear in the little church at il-Anderîn (Ill. 194-P), there are three arches on either side carried upon columns, and two storeys above them. Yet these are all embraced within a great arch, equal in span to the arch before the chancel; and, in theory, the plan of this church does not differ from that of the smaller one. In the ʔaurân there are two forms of the central

injured by the great earthquake of 526 and the builder Ephrem remade the great dome in wood.³⁴⁹ While it is obvious from the ruins that the octagon was not a common form for church buildings in Syria, Strzygowski cites eight examples in Asia Minor, of which the most famous was the octagonal church, built in the fourth century, at Nazianzus, and described by Gregory.³⁵⁰ While it is hard, with so few and such scattered examples, to form a clear idea of the development and spread of the octagonal type of church, the subsequent development of the central and octagonal

type of building in Armenia suggests an eastern inspiration.

Only two churches have as yet been discovered in Syria, if we omit the church of El Hadra at Amida which is outside the territory we are studying, that display segments of a circle in their exterior ground lines. These are the churches at Fal'ûl (*Ill.* 495-V) and Reşâfah (*Ill.* 177). A complete description of these churches is given in the Vth chapter. These churches and the church at Amida form a related group which should be studied together.³⁵¹

2. SUPERSTRUCTURES

A. CHAPELS AND BASILICAS

NORTHERN SYRIA

We have seen in the preceding pages that various kinds of wall construction were employed in the churches of Northern Syria; it has also been pointed out that different systems of supports were used in the superstructures, i. e., columns with narrow arches, and piers with broad arches. It now remains to describe some of the minor details of construction that give character to certain groups of churches, and often aid in fixing approximately their dates. Little description of the small, undivided, rectangular chapels is required; it is sufficient to say that the windows are placed high up in the side walls, that corbels for the support of the timber trusses of the roof are often inserted in the uppermost course, over the spaces between the windows, that windows sometimes occur in the west wall at the level of the side windows, and that the gable ends are usually pierced with small lights, occasionally circular in form. Continuous colonnades, or distyle porches, protected the entrances. The windows opened above the roofs of the colonnades.

APSE

In the churches of Northern Syria the apse is always of semicircular form,³⁵² and is covered with a half dome of cut stone. The semicircle is, in some cases, set with the line of its cord upon the inside line of

the chancel arch; in other cases the semicircle is set far back with its ends produced in straight walls. In one or two examples the side walls of the apse are produced so far that the curve of the apse could be drawn to a complete circle within the chancel arch. The walls of the apse terminate in piers. While the piers at the ends of the nave arcades are generally capped with a set of mouldings, the piers of the apse arch more frequently have caps of foliate form, though both are occasionally terminated in a similar manner either with mouldings or with a compound cap. The impost level of the half dome, especially in the later churches, is marked by a moulding carried around the apse at the level of the caps of the piers. The apse arch is ordinarily a semicircle slightly stilted, and the half dome is a quarter sphere horizontally prolonged in a tunnel vault, if the apse is deep; but there are a few examples of apse arches of horseshoe form³⁵³ and of half domes that curve inward at the impost.³⁵⁴ If the outer surface of a half dome was to be concealed by a roof, as was generally the case when a straight east wall of the church was higher than the wall of the apse, no effort was made to finish the upper ends of the vaulting stones; but the half domes of the apses of undivided chapels, and of basilicas with protruding apses, were built of stones so cut as to

³⁴⁹ Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie et du Liturgie*, II, "Antioche", col. 2372. A. Birnbaum, "Die Oktogone von Antiochia, Nazianz und Nyss", *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, XXXVIII, 1915, pp. 181—209. Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, III, 50.

³⁵⁰ Strzygowski, *Kleinasion*, pp. 70—103. A. Birnbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 201 says it was begun in 328 and finished by 363.

³⁵¹ Cf. p. 166, n. 309.

³⁵² Professor Butler's statement is probably true, but his plans of the East Church at Burdj Hêdar (*Ill.* 58) and the church at Bâtûtā (*P.* II, B. *Ill.* 374) show apses of horseshoe plan. His field notes, however, give no indication of this form. de Vogüé's Plan (*Ill.* 193-M.) of the church at Kalb Lauzeh also indicates a slight horseshoe curve in the apse, and the Christian church in the ruins of Ba'albek has an apse of horseshoe plan (Wiegand, *Ba'albek* II, p. 132).

³⁵³ East Church, Burdj Hêdar (*Ill.* 58), Bâtûtā (*P.* II, B. p. 330, *Ill.* 374), Tell 'Adēh (*P.* II, B. p. 273, *Ill.* 291), Dānā (Northern) (*Ill.* 63), Kherbit Tēzīn (*P.* II, B. p. 204, *Ill.* 209).

³⁵⁴ East Church at Burdj Hêdar (*Ill.* 58), Dānā (Northern) (*Ill.* 63).

Early Churches in Syria.



A



B

Ill. 196. Kfêr, Church: A. Interior of Apse; B. Exterior of Apse.

present a smooth concave surface without (*Ill.* 196), or were built up in a flat half cone of solid stone work.

SYSTEM

In taking up the basilical structures with a longitudinal system of supports, it is important now to describe the colonnades themselves in detail; the columns (*Ill.* 197-A) were generally adapted from the later Classic orders, though there was no attempt at a strict observance of the rules of proportion for the various orders, and capitals of all the three orders often appear in a single colonnade. There is no constant relation between the height of the columns and the distance between them. The shafts of the columns are monolithic and are usually elevated on a high cubical plinth-block. The colonnades, as a rule, terminate at either end in salient piers or responds, though half columns appear in this position in several churches, notably in the earlier churches of the Djebel Rîhā (*Ills.* 22, 23). The number of columns in a colonnade varies from three to fourteen according to the length of the nave. In the churches where piers were substituted for columns (*Ill.* 197-B), the arches are generally much broader, and the increased height of the arches is offset by the lowering of the piers, which are generally less than three metres high. Each pier is oblong in plan and consists of a base, shaft and cap.

Above the supports there are sufficient variations of detail to claim some description. In the first place, we have the fundamental difference presented by the architrave and arch, though the use of the one or the other had little effect upon the superstructure as a whole, and the employment of the architrave is so rare, except in the form of an arcuated lintel, as to render it almost a negligible element. I know positively of but three examples of its appearance in Syria, one in each of our geographical divisions, the small church of Btirsā³⁵⁵ in the Northern group of mountains, the great basilica of Zebed³⁵⁶ in the Northeastern region and the church of Saints Sergios and Bacchos at Umm is-Surab³⁵⁷ in the Southern Haurân. In the last of these examples it is certain that there were two storeys of columns, both carrying architraves. Of the other two it is impossible to speak with definiteness, owing to the condition of the ruins. The same may be said of the great church at il-Bârah where there are uncertain indications of two storeys of columns, the lower storey carrying architraves.

ARCHES

In the second place, it is to be noted that not all of the arcades are composed of true arches, and that

there are wide divergencies from the accepted rules for arch building in the true arcades. The three principal types of arch forms, exclusive of the simple voussoired arch, are shown in *Ill.* 198. It will be seen that (A), in this illustration, is not a true arch at all, but is merely a development of the arcuated lintel; in (B) a single keystone is introduced, and this form may properly be called an arch. The type represented by (C) is a fully developed arch in which the voussoirs are cut alternately long and short, and are fitted so as to interlock in the spandril. From numerous examples it may be argued that the first form, — the arcuated lintel, — was employed in nave arcades not later than the end of the fourth century, as at Midjleyyā (*Ill.* 23). It is not uncommon to find the apse arch springing from a higher impost level than the arches of the nave arcade, the caps of the piers of the apse often being set a whole course higher than the cap of the responds adjoining it. This difference of impost level is particularly noticeable in churches that have broad nave arches carried on piers, as at Brâd (*Ill.* 197-B). At Bāṣūfān the chancel arch sprang from a column on either side of the apse (*Ill.* 71). A special development of the arch system is found in the North Church of Ruwêḥā. Here the nave has three broad arches on either side, as in *Ill.* 197-B, but the piers which carry them are T form in plan, and a slender rectangular shaft is carried up from the pavement, through the cap of the pier, and against the spandril of the arches, to the clearstorey level, where transverse arches were thrown across the nave. Upon these weighted arches gables were erected which acted as trusses for the roof. This arrangement was repeated at Reṣāfah,³⁵⁹ and was amplified at iṭ-Ṭûbā,³⁶⁰ where cruciform piers are introduced with arches over the side aisles.

PIERS

The mention of piers in the paragraph above introduces the subject of piers in general. There were besides the square and rectangular piers for the support of the nave arches, and in addition to the piers of T form and cross-form, described above, two other sorts of piers which appear in the churches of Northern Syria which require special mention. These are, first, piers of complex plan, like those of the main octagon at Ẹal'at Sim'ân, which supported two great arches of the octagon and two smaller arches crossing the side aisle and connecting with the nave arcade. These piers have a most regular plan, but a very significant feature about them is the presence of columns standing just free from the inside reveals of the piers which form the angles of the octagon and which actually

³⁵⁵ *A.* II, p. 154, *Fig.* 62.

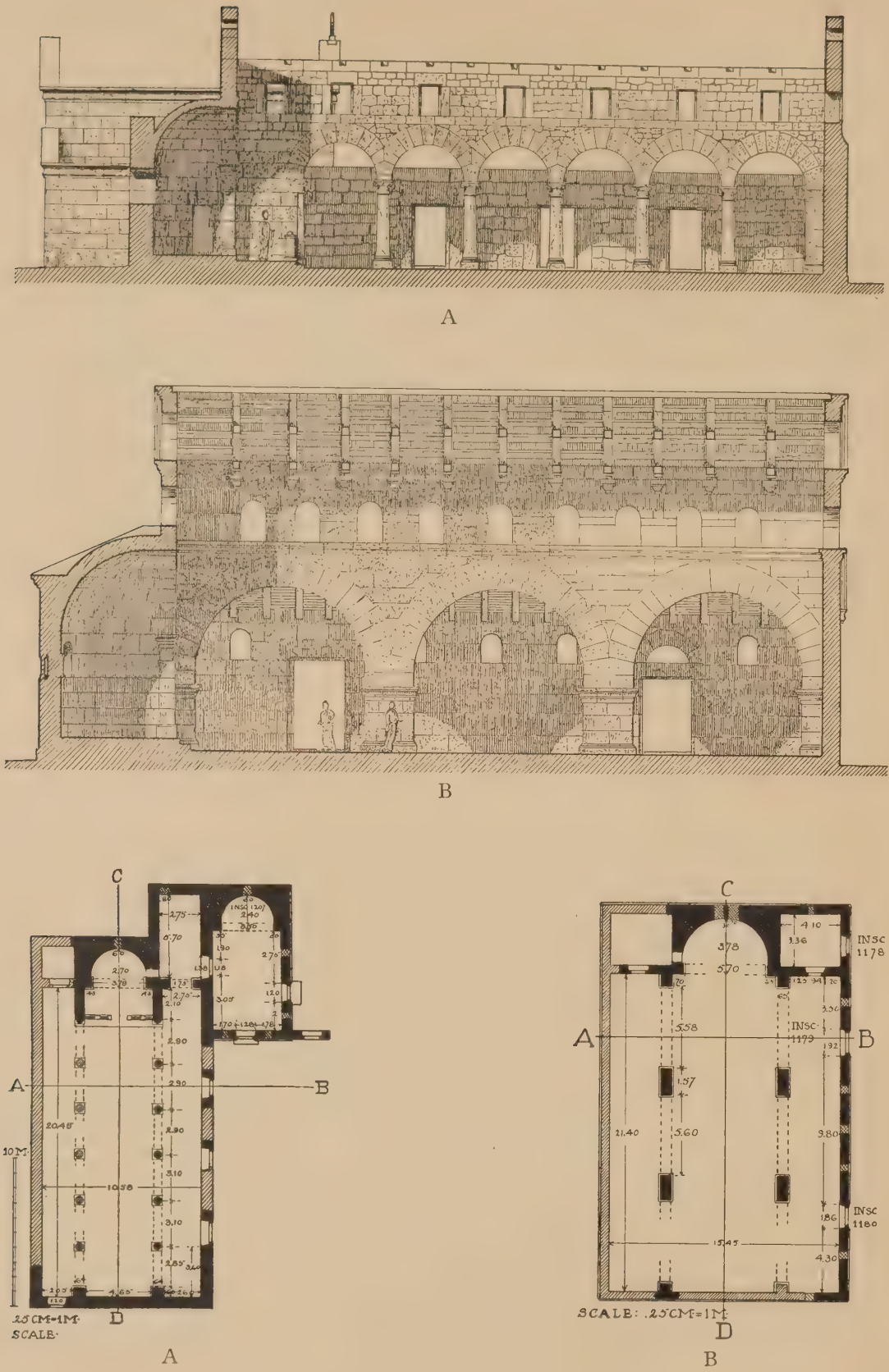
³⁵⁶ *A.* II, p. 302.

³⁵⁷ *P.* II, A. p. 95, *Ill.* 78.

³⁵⁹ *Cf.* p. 162.

³⁶⁰ *Cf.* p. 163.

Early Churches in Syria

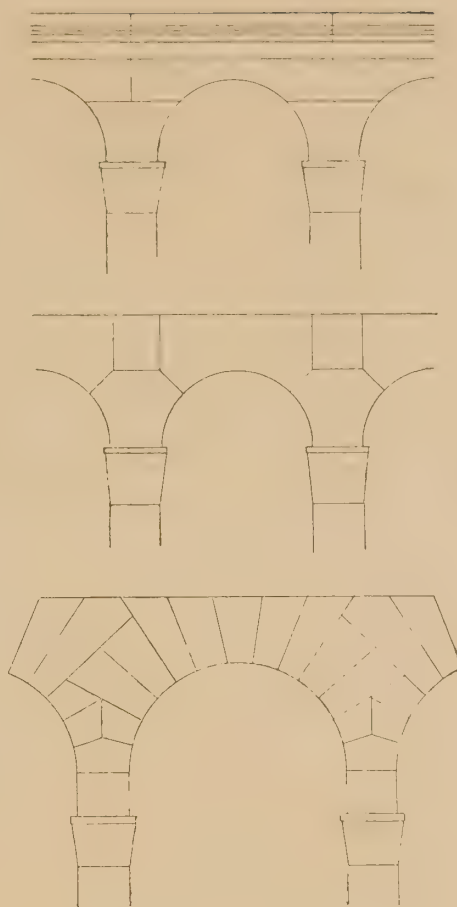


Ill. 197. Types of Longitudinal Systems:
A. Simkhâr, Plan and Section,
B. Brâd, North Church, Plan and Section.

support the voussoirs of the great arches. This combination of columns and piers to carry arches is not common in Syria but is also found in *La Madrasa al-Ḥalâwiyyah* at Aleppo.³⁶¹ The other type of pier, which is found in the narthex of ʔalʕat Simʕân, in the narthex of the "Cathedral" of Kerrâtin, and elsewhere, is cruciform in plan; across the front of the narthex three of the arms, which form the cross, carry arches, *viz.* two of the arches of the actual façade of the narthex and one transverse arch across the narthex; but the fourth arm has no arch to support and is nothing more nor less than an exterior buttress to take the thrust of the transverse arch. This detail is important in the history of arch construction. The buttresses of this form at the angles of the narthexes have two projecting members set at right angles, which serve only as buttresses, and the middle pair of cruciform buttresses in the narthex at ʔalʕat Simʕân have each a column for the support of the main arch, like those of the great octagon within. Exterior buttresses were not of Syrian origin, though they appear as early as the third century on the ʔaiṣariyeh at Shaḳḳâ. The few other examples are all late, and the appearance of buttresses along the exterior of the Sergios basilica at Raṣâfah (*Ill.* 174), which lies in the extreme east at the edge of the Euphrates, suggests that in Syria they were an adaptation in stone of the brick buttressing strips of Mesopotamia. Other examples are found on the two early churches at Ḥalabîyyeh,³⁶² which is east of Raṣâfah, on the Euphrates.

CLEARSTOREY

The clearstorey walls upon the arches of the nave arcades were seldom more than three or four courses (1.75 m. to 2.50 m.) high above the crowning voussoirs of the main arches (*Ill.* 197-A & B). The lowest course was provided with sockets to receive the ends of the rafters of the aisle roofs. The windows of the clearstorey appear to have been rectangular in the earliest churches, and were found in all the churches later than the fourth century. The round topped windows appear to have been almost invariably of the arcuated-lintel type. The number of windows, in churches that still preserve their clearstorey, is not always regulated by the number of arches in the nave arcades, except in the earlier churches, where a small rectangular window is placed above each arch; in later churches they are more numerous, and are not necessarily centred over either the arches or the columns below them. The perfectly preserved church of Mschabbak, a fifth century structure (*Ill.* 184), has



Ill. 198. *Types of Arches.*

nine windows above six arches on either side. The wall space between the clearstorey windows of the earlier churches, like those of Kharâb Shems and Simkhâr (*Ill.* 197-A), consists of small stone of irregular shape laid without reference to coursing; but the windows are framed in three monoliths. In the church of Mschabbak a large square block separates each pair of windows. In the clearstorey of these churches, as in the side walls of the undivided chapels, corbels were placed above the space between the windows, either in the upper course or just below the cornice. These were, of course, for the support of the roof trusses. A more elaborate treatment of this detail of construction is to be seen in the churches of ʔalb Lauzeh, ʔalʕat Simʕân and Reṣâfah, where a second corbel is placed at the level of the window-sill carrying a colonnette for the support of the upper corbel. These clearstorey colonnettes emphasized the supporting function of the walls.

FENESTRATION

There are usually three storeys of openings in the west wall, a row of windows being inserted at the

³⁶¹ Cf. p. 170.

³⁶² Sarre und Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise im Euphrates- und -Tigris-Gebiet*, II, Abbs. 353 & 358.



Ill. 199. Bākirhā, East Church, Façade.



FAÇADE.

SCALE: ————— 10M.

Ill. 200. Shēkh Slēmān, Church of St. Mary.

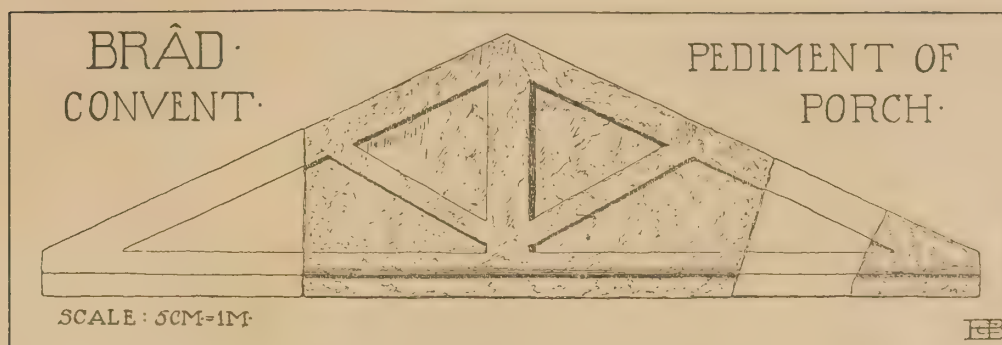
level of the main arches, above the portal on the ground storey and below the windows on the level of the clearstorey. Including the windows in the gable end, there are thus four storeys of openings in these façades (*Ill. 189*). The windows in the side walls are almost always placed with their sills on the level of the soffits of the lintels of the portals; they are more widely spaced than the windows of the clearstorey, but are of about the same dimensions, except in some of the earlier churches, like Midjleyyā,³⁶³ where the windows in the aisle wall are like Romanesque loop-holes set high in the wall. Extra openings for light were

often added by placing windows beside the west portal and in the west ends of the aisles, and by having open arches of discharge above the portals. The windows of the sanctuary vary in number, and are variously disposed according as the plan is semicircular or rectangular. The semicircular apse that is hidden on the outside by a straight wall, if it has windows at all, is provided with either one opening or with two grouped closely together; the projecting apse is provided with from three to five radiating windows of equal size. The rectangular sanctuary has seldom more than two windows, and these widely spaced. The prothesis is generally provided with a window to the east, and occasionally one in the south wall. The windows of the chamber on the opposite side of the apse are, in most cases, hardly more than loop-holes splayed inward, though there are examples of churches in which there are large windows in the diaconicon as well as in the prothesis; but the usual arrangement of the diaconicon, with its small doorway capable of being tightly closed and its narrow windows, indicates that this room was intended for the protection of valuables.

NARTHEX

The narthex of the Northern churches and many of the Southern churches consisted, as I have said, of a portico closed at both ends, often having the end walls returned to act as responds for the colonnade. The narthex of the East Church at Bākirhā (*Ill. 199*)

³⁶³ *A. II, p. 96.*



Ill. 201. Truss.

has four tall, monolithic piers carrying a moulded architrave, and it has a lean-to roof of wood. The more beautiful porch of the Church of Saint Mary at Shêkh Slēmân (Ill. 200) has four well proportioned columns with architraves above them. But the roof in this case was flat, as may be seen from the holes in the wall for the ends of the large beams; and a parapet of well turned posts and ornamented panels was placed above the architraves, showing that this roof was occupied at times either by the clergy or the people. Above the arched vestibule between the two western towers, as at Ƙalb Lauzeh and Dêr Termânîn, there was usually built a loggia.

ROOFS

The timber roofs of basilical churches consisted of the high, double pitched roof of the main aisle, and the lean-to roofs that covered the side aisles, the narthex, the side porticoes, the sanctuary and side chambers. The sanctuary of rectangular form was occasionally roofed by an extension of the gabled roof of the nave, and the apsidal sanctuaries often had a low, semi-conical roof above the half dome. Of course, no remnant of these wooden structures has survived. M. de Vogüé suggests schemes for the timbering of the high roofs which are unquestionably correct in the main. But there are two or three examples of stone pediments of the small gabled and stone roofed porches in which we find indicated, in relief carving, representations of wooden trusses, such as were undoubtedly used in the high, double pitched roofs. These carved representations are all of one type, showing a simple system of rafters with tie-beams, king post and braces or struts (Ill. 201). The disposition of these trusses and the number employed in a single roof may be determined from the number of corbels in the clearstorey. These show that the trusses were placed near together (Ill. 184). The lean-to roofs usually consisted of simple rafters and purlines, though there were evidences that, in some side aisle roofs, a sort of tie-beam, or brace was placed in a horizontal position from a socket in the outer

wall to a socket in the blocks above the capital of the nave arcade. Probably the end of the brace and the end of the rafter were connected by an upright post placed against the inside spandril of the arch, forming a half truss. All the evidence is opposed to the suggestion of flat ceilings under the trusses. Such ceilings would have been impossible in the aisles, for the arches of the nave arcades are higher than the aisle walls. As I have already said, it was not unusual to find the walls of at least one of the chambers beside the apse carried up in a tower that extended above the surrounding roofs; but these chambers were usually roofed by extensions of the aisle roofs and occasionally by an extension of the roof of the sanctuary. It is probable that the eastern towers and those of the west end were roofed in one of two ways: sometimes by a double pitched roof, as may be judged by the existence of gables at the top of certain towers, and sometimes by low pyramids. The rafters of the trusses and those of the lean-tos were, of course, connected with purlines that supported the roof covering of tiles. That tiles were in general use throughout Central Syria is plain from the number of well-made tiles found in the interiors of the buildings of all kinds. But the number of tiles found in a church is never sufficient to have covered the whole roof. I believe that this portable and valuable material was carried away in great quantities at a very early period, when the decay of the building had only begun. I have succeeded in finding only fragments, and these of two kinds, the ordinary large flat tile, *tegula*, with edges turned up, and the ridge shaped tile, *imbrex*, for covering the joints. It has not been possible to secure measurements for either kind. The cover of a sarcophagus at Djūwāniyeh (Ill. 202) is carved to represent a roof of tiles; this gives a sufficiently accurate idea of the appearance of the church roofs. We also know that stone was occasionally employed in the secondary roofs of some of the basilicas of Northern Syria. The most interesting and the best preserved case being the aisle roofs of the church of Ƙalb Lauzeh. Long



Ill. 202. Sarcophagus Cover at Djūwānīyeh.

slabs of stone, rather narrow, were laid from the top of the aisle wall to a corbel course above the arches of the nave arcade. They slope slightly in order to shed water and their lower ends are carefully moulded to form a cornice for the exterior side aisle wall. The sides of these slabs are alternately provided with curved sinkings and projections which lock together, like matrix and cast, forming a perfectly tight joint throughout the length of the slab (*Ill. 203*). There are numerous examples in which rectangular sanctuaries are roofed in stone. In the chapel of Surḳanyā the slabs are laid crosswise on the sloping walls,³⁶⁴ and in the chapel at Burdj Ḥêdar they are laid lengthwise from the rear wall of the sanctuary to a corbel course above the chancel arch.³⁶⁵ In both cases the edges are so cut that one loops over the other. Roofs of stone were also employed for the two-columned porches of church portals (*Ill. 204*). An architrave connected each column with the wall on either side of the portal; from one column to the other was set the monolithic pediment carved with a representation of a wooden truss, described above, and from this pediment to a corresponding groove in the wall long slabs were laid with edges cut out to overlap. At the top a V-shaped stone was set. The edges of this were cut to overhang slightly the joint on either side. It is probable that the outer surface of some of the half domes of projecting apses were finished off with half cone roofs of stone for the shedding of water: these were carved so as to give

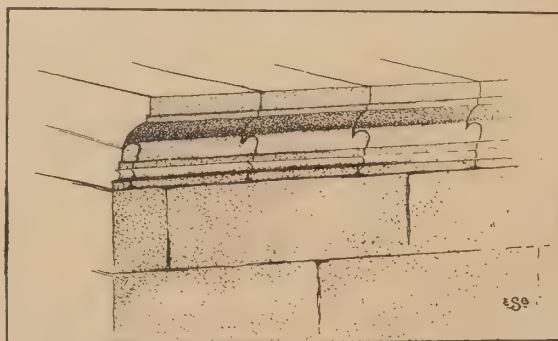
the general appearance of tiles. But a number of these half domes presented a highly finished spherical surface to the weather (*Ill. 196*).

NORTHEASTERN SYRIA

Because of the material used, far fewer examples of buildings are preserved to the same degree as in the North, and many details are consequently lacking. These churches, as has been described in another chapter, were built of basalt and brick. Their walls were constructed of either sun-dried brick or of small blocks of basalt, laid to form a double face; large stones were employed only for the lintels and these were relieved by discharging arches of many small voussoirs.

APSE

In Northeastern Syria the apse, while usually semi-



Ill. 203. Kalb Lauzeh, Cornice.

³⁶⁴ P. II, B. III. 367.

³⁶⁵ P. II, B. III. 315.



Ill. 204. Bātūtā, Chapel, Porch on South Side.

circular, is frequently horseshoe in plan³⁶⁶ and the bulbous half dome, with its horseshoe section and chancel arch, is found in the Martyrion at Reṣāfah. The semi-dome of the apse, which was rarely built of dressed stone, as in the churches of Northern Syria, was made of concrete, in which wrought wedges of broken stone were unevenly fitted, or of kiln-baked brick, rather poorly laid, or even of sun-dried brick.

System:

The longitudinal system of arches obtained uniformly throughout the region; but columns are found only in exceptional instances, piers taking their place in the great majority of churches (*Ill.* 205). In one class of churches, slender piers of square plan were used exactly as columns were used, being placed near together, as in the East Church at Zebed; in the other class, piers of oblong plan, widely spaced, were employed, which necessitated arches of broad span, as in the South Church at il-Anderīn (*Ill.* 209). The piers were built up of small stones in regular courses and had plainly moulded caps.

Arches:

The arches were generally composed of large voussoirs, well fitted. Here, as in Northern Syria, we find the impost level of the apse arch raised above that of the arches of the nave. At times the chancel arch and the arches of side apses were horseshoe in curve, as in the churches at Reṣāfah. The transverse arch spanning the nave at the westernmost bay, and sometimes buttressed by smaller arches over the side aisle, rose to a higher crown level than the arches of the nave arcades. The arches over the side aisles necessitated a pair of piers, cruciform in plan, at the west end of the nave and formed square compartments at the ends of the aisles, which may have carried square towers on either side of the western gable.³⁶⁷

Nothing can be said with definiteness regarding the clearstoreys of the churches of this region, for no remnant of an upper storey is preserved.

Narthex:

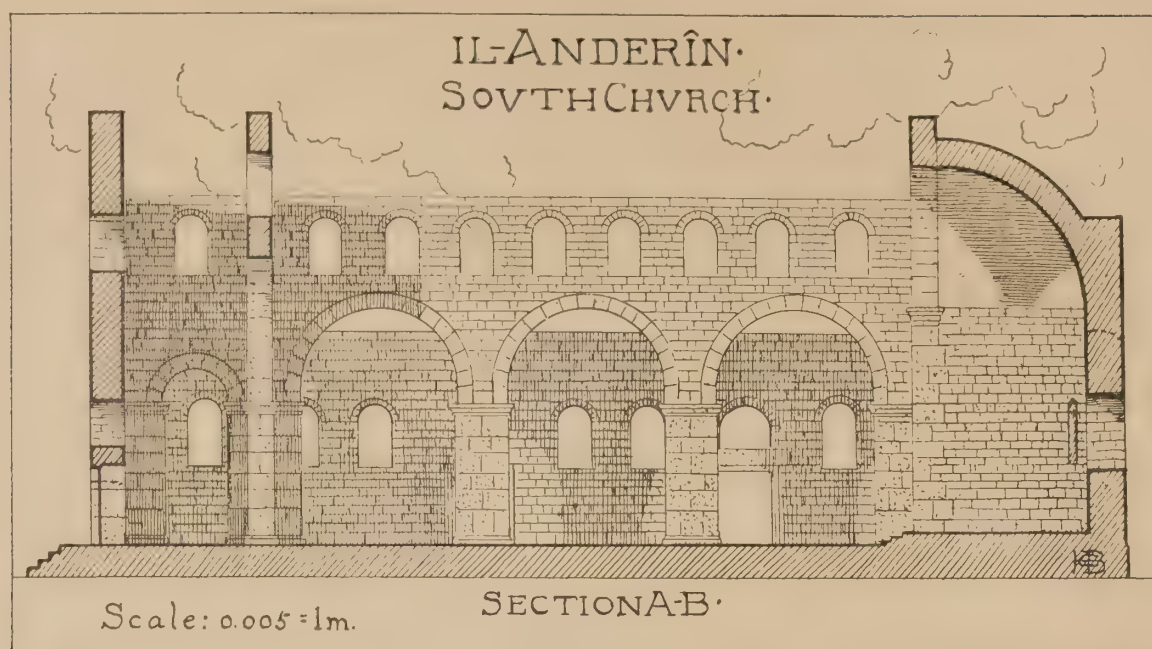
An excellent example of the triple-arched narthex of Northeastern Syria is the only well preserved portion

³⁶⁶ East Church at Zebed (*Ill.* 84), West Church at Zebed (*A*, II, *Fig.* 112), Sergios Church at Reṣāfah (*Ill.* 174), Martyrion at Reṣāfah (*Ill.* 177), Central Church at Reṣāfah (*Ill.* 181), Basilica "B" at Reṣāfah, Church I and II at Ḥalabiyyah, east of Reṣāfah on the Euphrates (Sarre und Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise im Euphrat-und-Tigris-gebiet*, II, Abbs. 353 and 358.

³⁶⁷ Cf. p. 190.

Early Churches in Syria.

Early Churches in Syria



Ill. 205.

of the Cathedral of *Tarutia* (Ill. 169). Three arches, carried by two slender columns between the middle piers, made an impressive central entrance to the church. The outer piers, and those inside the narthex, were cruciform in plan, providing buttressing for the arches.

Roofs:

So little of the superstructures of these churches remains that very little can be said about the roofs. Since stone slabs were rarely employed and every vestige of the timber work has long since perished, we have no actual data: yet it is safe to conjecture that the wooden structures did not differ from those of the North. At *it-Ṭūbā*, in the *ʿAlā*, I found a prothesis roofed with stone slabs (Ill. 175), a corbel on either side supporting a stone beam across the middle of the chamber. Between this beam and the walls, well dressed slabs of stone were laid, forming a roof which is still intact. There is no existing evidence that the basilica churches of Northeastern Syria were vaulted. It is possible that some of the smaller churches were covered with tunnel vaults and that cross vaults were at times used over the side chambers. The presence of tunnel and cross vaults in the palace and church at *Ḳaṣr Ibn Wardân*, the general use of brick, and the obvious relations of this region with the traditions of Northern Mesopotamia suggest the possibility of some vaulting.

Southern Syria:

In Southern Syria, as we have seen, there are, besides

the undivided churches already described, two types of basilical churches and the broad hall church, divided by one or more single arches of longitudinal span which carry the flat roof. The broad hall type, which was the least common as a form of church structure, is the same in principle as a single aisle church with transverse arches, but instead of having its long axis running east and west, it is oriented on its short axis (191-I). Of the two basilical types, the three-aisled basilica, with its transverse system of supports is peculiar to the mountains of the *Ḥaurân*, while in other parts of Southern Syria is a longitudinal system differing in many details from that seen in the North and Northeast. The basilicas of the former type are apparently of early date; they are numerous and are found within a limited district. This type seems to have been adopted from a pre-Christian form of structure of which an example, belonging to the second or third century after Christ, is found at *Shakka*.

In the basilicas with a longitudinal system of supports, piers and columns both appear; but the preponderance is decidedly in favour of the pier. A small number of churches were designed throughout on the lines of the broad-arches churches of Northern and Northeastern Syria; two large churches, one at *Umm Djimâl* (Ill. 114), and another at *id-Dêr*, south of *Boṣrā*, might easily be mistaken, but for the material, for Northern churches with piers and broad arches. But the great majority of these Southern basilicas, though having the longitudinal system, differ from the Northern and Northeastern churches in having flat

roofs, either of stone or wood. For this reason, the side walls are of the same height as the east and west walls, and all are high, like the walls of the churches of the Djebel Ḥaurân. The side aisles were roofed with stone slabs, and the central aisle, either with a flat roof of wood (*Ill.* 206), or with a gabled roof without a clearstorey (*Ill.* 207). Seven of the larger churches in Umm idj-Djimâl, four in il-Umtā-ʿiyeh and three in Umm il-Ḳuṭṭên were built in this way. One of the churches in Umm idj-Djimâl is of

an unusual form (*Ill.* 207); the central aisle is disproportionately wide and the side aisles unusually narrow. The nave arcades consist of three broad arches on either side supported, not by piers, but by quite slender Doric columns. The side walls are high and had a corbel course for the support of stone roofs over the side aisles. The west wall has a gable, showing that the broad middle aisle was provided with a double pitched roof with trusses resting directly upon the stone roofs of the side aisles.

B. CENTRAL STRUCTURES.

IN as much as the central and domical types of churches were not common, with the possible exception of Northeastern Syria, and were scattered over the whole of Syria, it seems better to analyze first the various types of these central structures.

1. *Square Exterior:*

There are three forms of buildings with square exteriors. First, and simplest, is the plain square, vaulted with a conical brick cupola by means of squinches at the corners. They were common in the Ḥaurân during the Roman period, but none that remain seem to have been Christian. De Vogüé calls them *Kalybé*, or sacred houses.³⁶⁸ What influence these small domical structures had upon Christian building it is hard to say, save as they show that the conical dome upon a square plan was used for sacred edifices at an early date.

The second variant is the square brought to an octagon on the interior by means of apsidal niches at the corners. The best pre-Christian example is the *apodyterium* of the South Baths at Boṣrā,³⁶⁹ which is vaulted with octagonal cloister vaults, and dates from the Roman period. All the Christian examples date, however, from the sixth century; two being in Southern, and the third in Northern Syria. The two Southern examples are the churches of Saint George at Boṣrā (*Ill.* 124), where the interior is first brought to a circle by means of niches in the corners and then to an octagon by the piers which carried the clearstorey drum and dome, and the church of Saint George at Zorʿah (*Ill.* 194-R), where again there are piers forming the interior octagon. At Zorʿah the problem of placing a dome on the octagon was solved without the use of squinches by starting in the spandrels of the arches of the arcades to warp the wall from an octagon to a circle. The third and only Northern example which

probably dated from the sixth century, is the so-called Baptistery at Ḳalʿat Simʿân (*Ill.* 194-O), where two of the corners of the interior are filled with apsidal niches and the other two with rectangular niches. The central octagon was probably covered with a wooden roof.

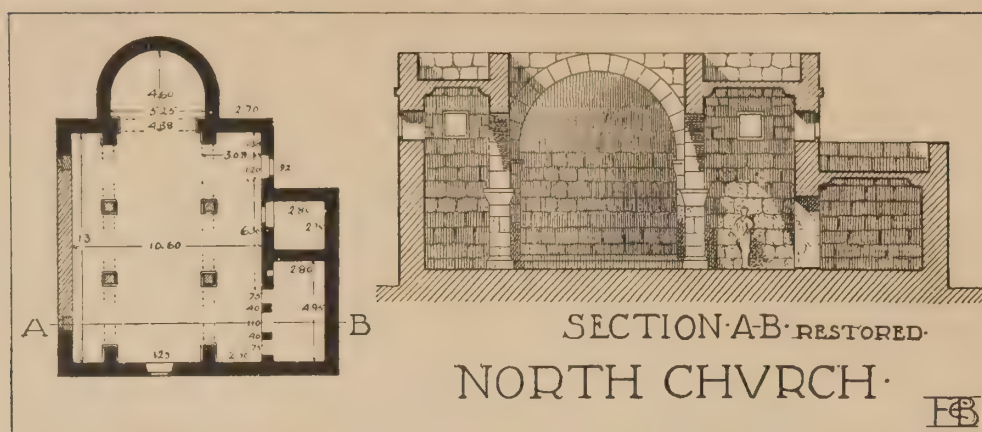
The third form is the square divided on the interior into a cruciform plan so that its central square, which could be vaulted with a dome, cloister vault or cross vault, and carried up as a clearstorey, was buttressed by the tunnel vaults of the four arms. The classical prototype in Syria was the second century Praetorium at il-Mismiyeḥ, *Phaene*, which is on the outskirts of the Ḥaurân, between Damascus and Boṣrā. Here columns divided the interior and supported the four tunnel vaults which formed the arms of the interior cross, the interior square was covered with a cloister vault, and the four corners, which are small, were roofed with flat slabs of stone. The Christian examples of this plan, which became so popular in the Byzantine world, are all of the sixth century and mostly in Northeastern Syria. The examples in Northeastern Syria are the little church at il-Anderîn (*Ill.* 194-P), which Professor Butler restores with a conical dome over the interior square, the church at iṭ-Ṭûbā, which should perhaps be restored in the same manner,³⁷⁰ the central church at Reṣāfah, which had tunnel vaults over the four arms, small domes at the corners, and a dome of either wood or brick over the central square, and the interior of the sixth century palace at Ḳaṣr Ibn Wardân,³⁷¹ where the four tunnel vaults of the cruciform arms terminate in apses. In Northern Syria the type is not used for churches and, in fact, does not appear in its usual form; the Baptistery at Ḳalʿat Simʿân is at least cruciform in plan, with its interior square brought to an octagon. But under this type it is necessary to include two sixth century stone sepulchral monuments

³⁶⁸ de Vogüé, *La Syrie Centrale*, Pl. 6, text, p. 41.

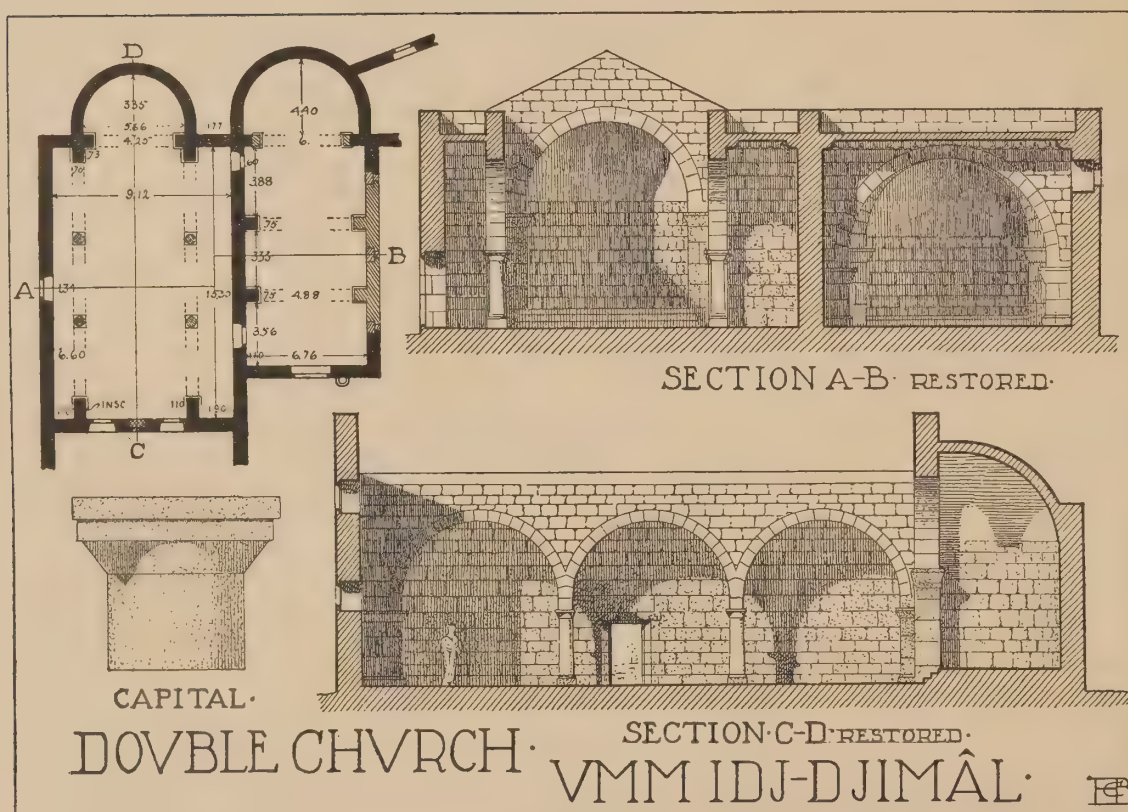
³⁷⁰ Cf. p. 163 note 299.

³⁶⁹ *P.* II, A. p. 260, *Ill.* 30.

³⁷¹ *P.* II, B, Pl. IV.



Ill. 206. *Umm idj-Djimâl.*



Ill. 207.

of Northern Syria: the tomb at Ḥāss³⁷² and the tomb of „Bizzos” at Ruwêḥā.³⁷³ Both tombs have a cubical base of cut stone with a cruciform interior, formed by four deep arches, which make a small square covered with a dome. At Ruwêḥā, and probably at Ḥāss, the problem of fitting the dome to the square is disregarded by the expedient of making the diameter of the dome enough greater than the diagonal of the interior square so that the dome requires no support at the corners. The beautiful cut stone cupola, which is slightly conical, of the „Bizzos” tomb is unique in Northern Syria. It is not built corbel fashion, but is constructed upon the principle of the arch, each stone being wedge shaped and carved to a concave form on the interior and convex form on the outside. The precision and finish of the stone cutting shows that its builders were accustomed to the domical form, even though today it is the only extant stone cupola in all Syria; it undoubtedly was a prototype for the Mediaeval and modern *weli* of Mohammedan natives in Syria.

2. The interior Square with Buttreassing Apses:

The classification is more descriptive of a structural tradition than of an architectural exterior, for the type applies to those buildings where the central square, made by four arches, is buttressed on two or more sides by apsidal half domes, and is vaulted with a dome, fitted to the square by means of either squinches or pendentives. The exterior is not essential to the type, for it may vary according to the arrangement of aisles around the central structure. An early Roman prototype appears in the Baths at Brâd in Northern Syria³⁷⁴ where two half domes buttress the central dome on opposite sides of the square. With the exception of the Theodosios church at Jerusalem,³⁷⁵ all the Christian examples in Syria date from the sixth century, and are located in Northeastern Syria. The best preserved example is the main hall of the Palace at ẖaṣr Ibn Wardân, where the arches of the central square are formed by four short tunnel vaults, each one terminating in a half dome. The other examples are more problematic, due to their ruined condition; but even in their plans they show a tri-apsidal arrangement about the central square and an extension of the fourth side as a nave, which in its turn, terminates in an apse at the sanctuary. The churches, which perhaps had this form of superstructure, are the Church of Saint Mary, *El Hadra*, at Amida,³⁷⁶ the Martyrion at Reṣâfah³⁷⁷, and perhaps the church at Fal'ûl³⁷⁸.

3. Polygonal Exterior:

Central structures, showing a polygonal, and usually an octagonal, exterior, though rare, were not unknown in Northern and Northeastern Syria. At Khuraiyib³⁷⁹ in the Ḥaurân, are the foundations of an octagonal structure; but with the exception of this ruin the form does not appear to have been used in the South. The most famous octagonal church in Northern Syria was the great Constantinian Church at Antioch³⁸⁰, with its golden dome, of which nothing remains today. An example of a complete hexagon is seen in a small building at Dêr Sêtâ³⁸¹, which was probably a baptistery; and the interior columns shown in M. de Vogüé's plate are restorations. It is quite probable that the whole building was covered by a simple six-sided pyramid without interior supports. The little church at Midjlêyyâ (*Ill.* 195-U) consists of an octagon to which the apse and side chambers of a basilica have been added. Within are six columns, four of which stand at the angles of the interior octagon and carry arches. The other two divide two parallel sides of the octagon, somewhat prolonged, into two arches. This church, which is in a sadly ruinous condition today, was undoubtedly far better preserved when M. de Vogüé made the drawing for his book³⁸².

That central structures of polygonal outline were known in Northeastern Syria is shown by the octagonal church at Mir'âyeh (*Ill.* 195-T). Naught exists today but the lower parts of the walls, and it would be difficult to attempt a restoration of the superstructure with the data obtainable. The general plan, with its octagon opening on one side into the sanctuary which is then flanked by two side chambers, is similar in arrangement to the church at Fal'ûl (*Ill.* 195-V), in the same region, with the one big difference that the main body of the church at Fal'ûl is circular instead of octagonal. From the much broken material lying in the ruins I should judge that there was originally an interior octagon of piers, carrying arches and a clearstorey which was covered with a light and perishable dome of sun-dried brick.

4. Domed Basilica:

When the piers which carry the arches supporting the central dome, like the columns supporting the clearstorey wall of a regular basilica, are entirely inside the rectangle of the building, and so separated from the side walls by aisles in one or two storeys, the church is called a „domed basilica”, because one feels

³⁷² de Vogüé, *op. cit.* Pl. 72; Butler, *A.* II, p. 246, *Fig.* 99.

³⁷⁴ *P.* II, B. *III.* 331.

³⁷⁶ Cf. p. 166, n. 309.

³⁸⁰ Cf. p. 192.

³⁷⁵ Weigand, „Das Theodosioskloster”,

³⁷⁷ Cf. p. 166.

³⁸¹ de Vogüé, Pl. 117.

³⁷³ de Vogüé, Pl. 91; Butler, *A.* II, p. 247.

Byzantinische Zeitschrift, XXIII, 1914, p. 167 F.

³⁷⁸ Cf. p. 164.

³⁸² de Vogüé, *op. cit.* Pl. 63.

³⁷⁹ *P.* II, A. p. 106, *Ill.* 83.

in such a structure that, in conception, the domical superstructure was imposed upon the idea of a three-aisled basilica. This type is best illustrated in the sixth century by the Byzantine church of Santa Sophia at Salonica. While it was common in Asia Minor and in Byzantium, it was unknown in Syria with the single exception of the great church at ʔaṣr Ibn Wardān (Ill. 194-Q). This church, in its methods of construction, as well as its general form, represents an outside influence in Northeastern Syria. Professor Butler saw an analogy to Justinian's work at Constantinople, and Strzygowski considers it a direct importation from the northeast, where he believes the type developed. Certainly it appears to be a Byzantine structure, whether the inspiration came from Constantinople or from Asia Minor; but its pointed brick arches and warped pseudo-pendentives, pierced with windows, leave it still an interesting exception, imposing as a monument even in its ruins.

5. *Cupola Hall:*

While this is not strictly a central church, the long nave, with or without side aisles, covered by a series of domes, such as are so common among the French Romanesque churches of Aquitaine, is central to the extent of using the dome. Again there is only a single known example of this type of church in Syria. If Guyer's restoration of the church, called *La Madrasa al-Ḥalâwiyyah* (Ill. 195-W), is correct, we have in Northeastern Syria a three-aisled church, of the sixth century, with its nave covered by three domes which are actually carried by T-shaped piers, but rest upon transverse and longitudinal arches supported by columns incorporated into the piers.

The foregoing analysis of central structures in Syria

raises the question of the use and importance of the dome. The dome was undoubtedly known and commonly used from very early times in Southern and Northeastern Syria. Among the methods of roofing in Northeastern Syria, where sun-dried brick was used, we must assume that the *kubbeh*, or conical dome, of mud or sun-dried brick, so commonly used by the modern natives to cover their houses, goes back to ancient times. But it was not until the Sassanian period, and then in the Persian region to the east, that there was an effort to use the dome for monumental architecture. Usage not only perpetuated the dome as a roof for small dwellings, store-rooms, granaries and the like, but also supplied traditional, and hence revered, types of temples, palaces and tombs, which did not use the cupola. It was not until the third century in Persia, under influences perhaps from Turkestan, that the dome was adopted and developed as a structural, and hence artistic, feature of monumental architecture. What broke down the aesthetic opposition to the use of the cupola for monumental building it is impossible to say. Perhaps, as Ernst Diez suggests,³⁸³ the breakdown of this opposition began in Parthian times from Roman influence. In Syria, however, where the Hellenistic tradition was the basis of the architectural forms, the Persian influence from beyond the Euphrates and the Byzantine influence from the north could not change the habits and aesthetic ideals of the builders. Although the dome was known by the Christian architects and used as early as the fourth century for the great church at Antioch, it was never popular in Syria, especially in the North. It was only in the sixth century, and then largely in Northeastern Syria, that the central structure and its domical roof became in any way a type of church building.

³⁸³ Ernst Diez, *Die Kunst der Islamischen Völker*, p. XII.

CHAPTER VIII

ACCESSORIES: 1. EXTERIOR ACCESSORIES.

OUTSIDE the sacred edifice itself, many of the churches of Syria had dependencies which should be considered together with them. I do not refer to the monastic institutions, which are discussed elsewhere in these pages, but to the numerous churches that have no residential buildings connected with them, and which appear to have been simple parish churches or memorials. Some of these buildings, like the church of Saint Sergios at Bābiskā and the church of the Trinity at Dār Kīṭā, both in the North, and several of the minor churches at Umm idj-Djimāl in the South, have no dependencies; but the majority of the churches have certain exterior accessories in the form of precinct walls, entrance gateways, baptisteries and, in a few cases, monumental tombs and towers within the precinct walls.

Precinct Walls and Gates.

The walled enclosures of Syrian churches, unlike those of the Latin basilicas, are seldom in the form of an atrium at the west end of the edifice. They were usually at the south side, occupying the entire length of the building, and having two entrances corresponding to the portals in the south wall of the church. In several examples, notably in the cathedral at Brād, the court was provided with an interior peristyle which formed a continuous covered passage about three sides of the court, resembling, in this respect, the Latin atrium and the Mediaeval cloister. The height of the outer walls did not exceed four metres; the columns of the peristyle were slender in proportion to the light load they had to support. A single church in Northern Syria, and a number of churches in the Northeast district, stood in the middle of large quadrangular precincts. The Northern example is the "Bizzos" church at Ruwêḥā (*Ill.* 208). Here the walled precinct, or peribolos, is entered through a double arched vestibule, east of the middle of the south wall. The vestibule is an almost square building, built inside the wall; two broad arches form the outer and inner entrances, and the building is divided by a wall with a doorway capable of being closed with a wooden door. The whole building is roofed with slabs of stone. Adjoining it on the east is a small room which was probably used by the porter.

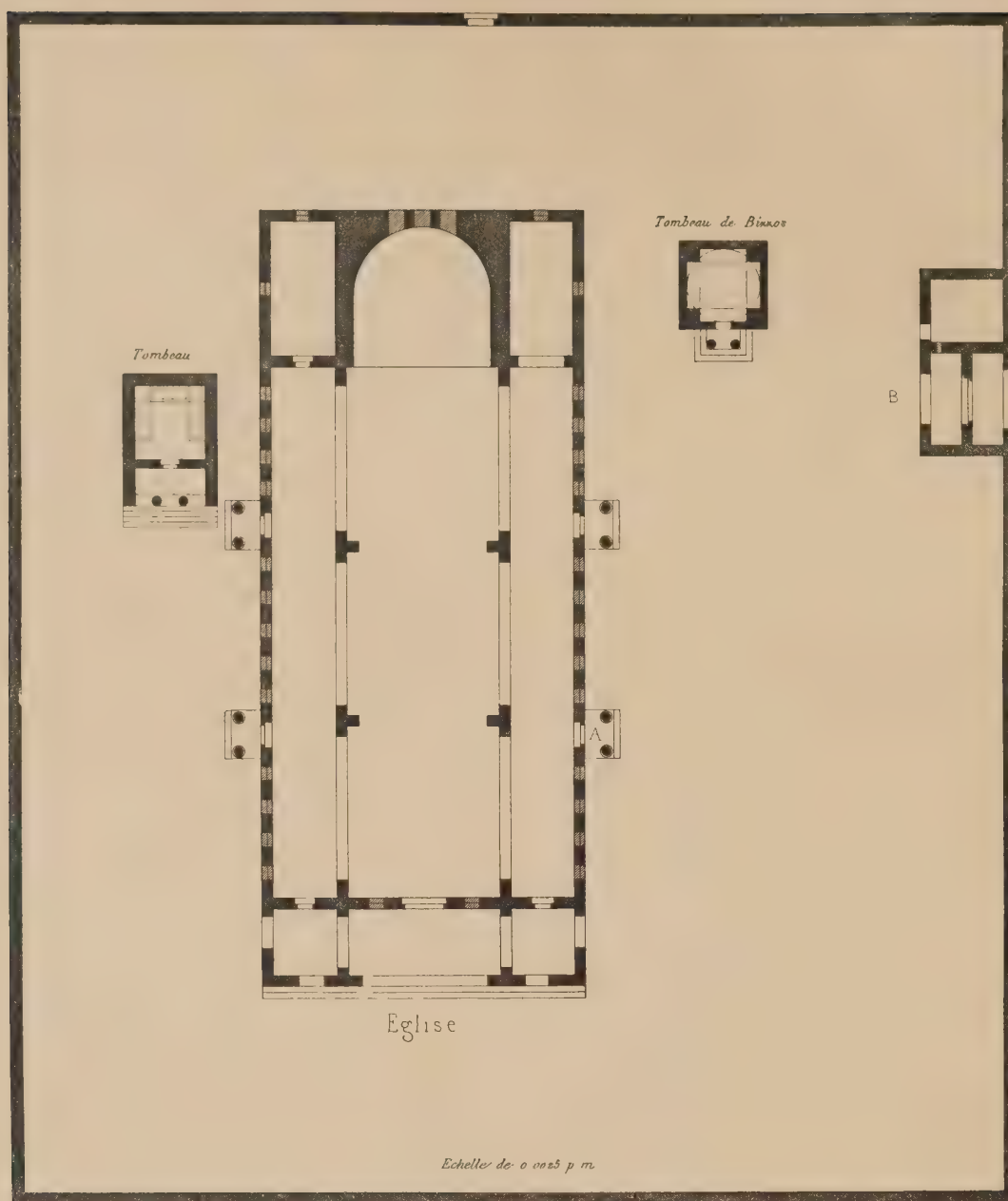
In Northeastern Syria we find the South Church

and the Cathedral of il-Anderîn, the West Church of Zebed, the South Church of Muʿallaḡ and other churches placed in the middle of a peribolos like that at Ruwêḥā. In most of these examples only the foundations of the precinct walls were built of stone; the higher parts, being of sun-dried brick, have disintegrated. In the case of the South Church of il-Anderîn alone (*Ill.* 209) was the wall constructed of stone. The church is not symmetrically placed within the peribolos, being 29 metres from the west wall, 10 metres from the north wall, 7 metres from the south, and 4.70 metres from the east wall. The wall was built on the plan of the fortresses of the region. At the angles of the peribolos were square towers, projecting slightly from the lines of the side walls. In each side was a single vestibuled entrance which, unlike the vestibule at Ruwêḥā cited above, protruded beyond the wall. From the mass of the ruins about each gate, I surmise that these also were carried up a storey or more in the form of towers. The wall was strengthened by interior buttresses 2.40 m. apart, each about a metre square, and these appear to have supported wall arches. It appears that each of the wall arches covered a tomb, like an arcosolium; so that the church was the centre of a huge necropolis or *campo santo*. Directly west of the church, 6.35 m. distant, and on axis with it, is a cistern 8.50 m. by 7.20 m. This is divided by two sets of longitudinal arches; the whole was roofed over with slabs. From the northeast corner of the cistern is a conduit, consisting of a semi-cylindrical channel cut in long slabs of basalt, which brought the roof water from the northwest angle of the church.

There are few preserved examples of precinct walls in Southern Syria, except those connected with monasteries. This is due to the fact that the towns of Southern Syria have been more generally inhabited in modern times than the towns of the Northern and Northeastern districts, and the walls have been broken up.

Baptisteries.

Many of the independent churches of Northern Syria were provided with baptisteries. Some of these were detached buildings, others were joined to one of the chambers beside the sanctuary. In the Northeastern region, and in the Ḥaurân, no building or part of a building has been found that can definitely be called

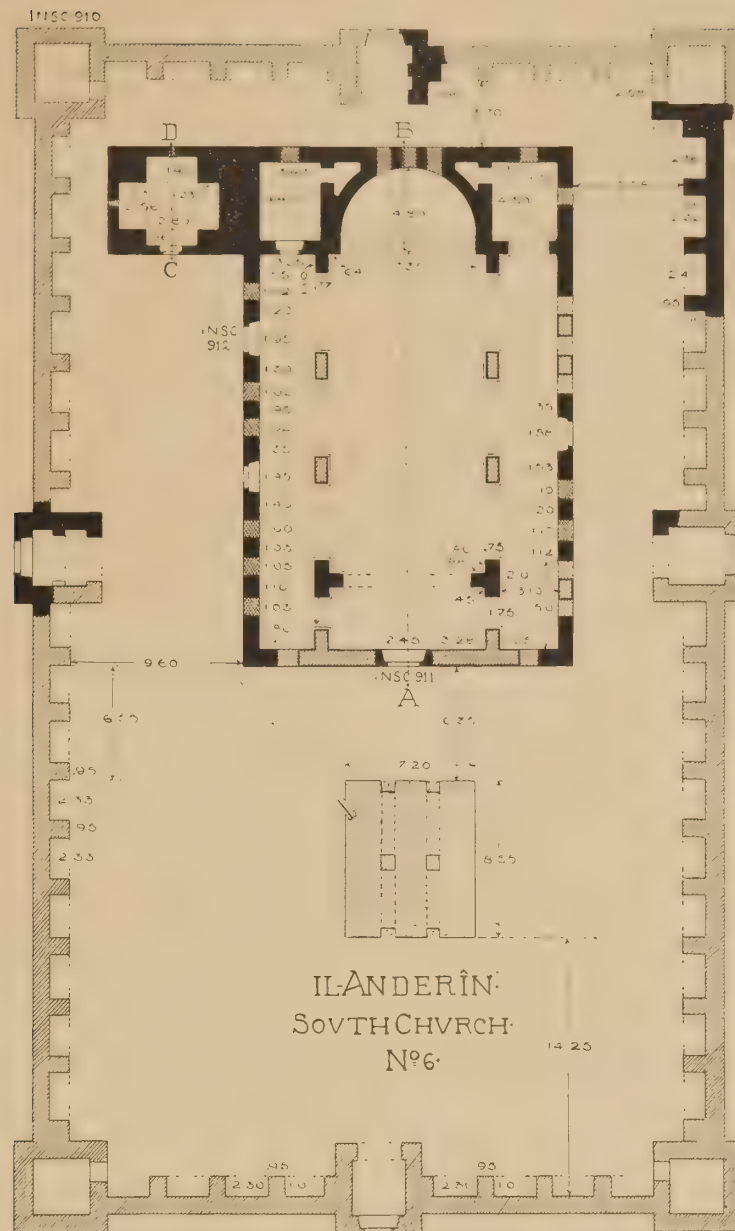


Ill. 208. Ruwêhâ, Bizzos Church, with Peribolos.

a baptistery; but in the North were the evidence of the buildings themselves not complete, the inscriptions upon some of them would furnish the necessary proof. The detached baptisteries were variously placed, usually to the southeast of the church, but in one example near the west end. They were almost always of square plan, the hexagonal baptistery of Dêr Sêtâ³⁸⁴ being among the few exceptions. The superstructure formed a nearly perfect cube in many instances, and the height was never greater, and seldom much less, than the length of one side. A few buildings had semicircular half domed apses protruding from the east wall, as, for example, the baptistery of Saint Paul and Moses

at Dâr Kîtâ (Ill. 166). Others, like the baptistery at Khirbit il-Khaṭīb (Ill. 210), were provided with a niche and basin out in a doubly thick east wall; but the majority of the detached baptisteries had neither apse nor niche, and such fonts as they had must have been in the middle. The only one of these baptisteries that has been excavated for the purpose of finding a font is the baptistery of the church of Saint Paul and Moses at Dâr Kîtâ. The chief entrance to the baptistery was usually in the west wall, though the building just mentioned had also a doorway on the north, opening toward the church. Windows were placed high on the walls, often on all sides, two or three on

³⁸⁴ de Vogüé, *op. cit.*, Pl. 117.



Ill. 209. il-Anderîn, South Church, with Peribolos.

the side and, in all the existing examples, were round topped. The roofs were of wood and, in all probability, of pyramidal form, for in none of the six or seven examples that seem to be in a perfect state of preservation, so far as stone work is concerned, is there any remnant of a gable. These examples, beside those already mentioned, are one at Dêhes, two at Dashmishli, one at Bâkîrĥā, and one at B'ûdā. Other baptisteries are to be found at Ksêdjbed, Brâd, Babiskā and Qaşr Iblisū, besides a second example at Dâr Kîta. There are several buildings of greater dimensions, some of them with large apses and interior columns, that stand in the same location with reference to their churches that baptisteries occupy (compare Brâd, *III.* 33); but I believe that these were chapels for other uses, since some of them form parts of monastic establishments.

Chapels.

There are, besides the buildings which are certainly known to have been baptisteries, a number of buildings connected with independent churches, which cannot be classed as baptisteries, and which may be grouped for discussion as chapels. One of these is joined to the baptistery of the West Church at Kaşar Iblisū (*Ill.* 53) and, with the baptistery, fills the east side of the enclosure on the south side of the church. The building is enclosed on three sides, but upon the court it is open, there being a rectangular pier between two pilasters which, with the pier, carry simple architraves. Within, on the south side, is a plain stone sarcophagus. The lid of the sarcophagus is missing, so that it is impossible to know if the sarcophagus could have been used as an altar.

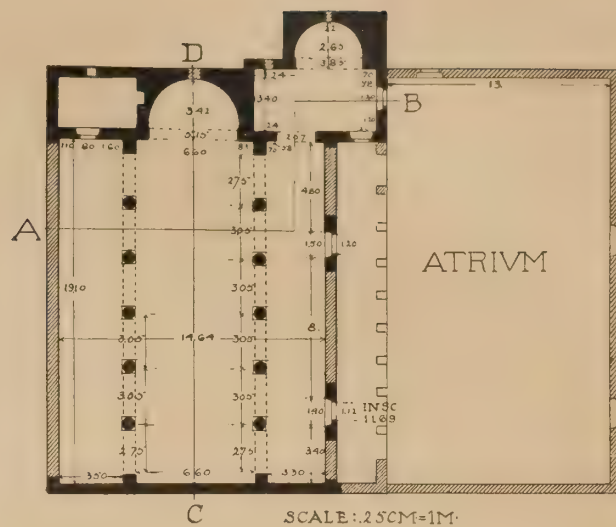


Ill. 210. *Khirbit il-Khaṭīb, Baptistery,*
Dated 532/3 A.D.

In the large West Church of Burdj Hêdar (Ill. 211) we find another form of chapel. The original prothesis seems to have been enlarged by a slight extension toward the east and by another extension on the south, which almost doubled its original size. Toward the east, and on the south of the central axis of the chamber, an apse was built, almost as wide as the apse of the church, and enclosed in straight outer walls. Two doorways opened from the chapel upon the courtyard, one to the west and one to the south; a window was placed in the east wall and another in the apse. I was unable to excavate in the apse of this chapel, and therefore cannot say whether the prothesis, in this case, was enlarged to form a baptistery. I think it more probable, however, that the prothesis was extended for some particular reason connected with its usual purpose. A somewhat different arrangement of a chapel, which was joined to a church two centuries after the building of the church, is found at Simḵâr.³⁸⁵

Tombs.

The topic of places for burial in the churches and in chapels connected with them, is discussed in another chapter. I wish, at this point, to consider only the tombs that were erected within the church enclosures, and which form a part of the group of buildings about an ecclesiastical edifice; and instances of this kind are quite rare. I may cite, as an interesting example, the "Bizzos" church at Ruwêḥā (Ill. 208), where, it will be remembered, the church stands in the midst of a large rectangular peribolos. On either side of the church, and free from it, stands a monumental tomb structure. One of these is in the form of a small temple, distyle in antis, raised upon a high podium. The other is a cubical building surmounted by a dome.³⁸⁶ These tombs are the only buildings, beside the vestibule, that stood within the enclosed precinct of this church. Another type of tomb is found in Northeastern Syria, where the ruined condition of buildings, prevents our knowing if tombs were commonly placed beside the churches. On the north side of the South Church at il-Anderîn, adjoining the diaconicon, is a large tomb structure, square in outline, but cruciform within. The



Ill. 211. *Burdj Hêdar. West Church and Chapel.*

arms of the cross are formed by deep arches, or arcossolia, in one of which is the entrance; the others embraced sarcophagi. The four arches supported, in place of a dome, a tunnel vault of concrete, having its axis north and south, and springing from the crown level of the arches.

Towers.

The free-standing towers of Northern Syria are generally connected with the monasteries, although there are numerous towers in this region which are independent of both convents and churches, and yet, by their inscriptions, appear to have been religious, or semi-religious, buildings dedicated to the Holy Trinity or to some Saint. The purpose of these towers is, in most cases, difficult to discover. The independent towers of Northeastern Syria, on the other hand, present no problems as to their use, for they are usually fortified at the base by a battering wall, and their inscriptions suggest that they were watch towers, military in purpose, one of them being dedicated to Saint Longinus the Centurion. There are many towers in Southern Syria, some of them free-standing; but few of them are connected with churches, though many are connected with private houses. Since most of the independent towers in the South were built in open country, on high ground, and between fortifications, it is quite certain that they were of military character, and one may safely presume that the towers in the towns were also for watching and signalling. As to the towers of the churches, one can only speculate as to their probable purpose. Church towers, like those of Umm is-Surab and Sameh in the South, had large openings separated by colonnettes in the top

³⁸⁵ Cf. p. 29, 149.

³⁸⁶ Cf. p. 203.

storey, and I cannot believe that these were added by the Moslems, though they resemble the top storeys of minarets. It seems more probable that they were the prototypes from which the minarets took their form. A host of church towers in the North, like those of ʔalb Lauzeh and Termanin, also had large windows in the uppermost storey. What purpose could they have served, if not to house some instrument for producing sound to call the worshippers together? It is generally admitted that bells were not introduced into churches before the seventh or eighth century; but the church bell is believed to have had a predecessor in the *nāḳūs* or *semantron*, an instrument in which two suspended logs were made to swing toward each other and touch, producing a booming sound not unlike that of a great bell. One of our Syrian towns bears the name Banḳūsā. It is probable that this town received its name from the musical summons of its church towers, and once had the Syriac name of Banāḳūs-ā, *Place of (the) Semantron*, which was simplified to Banḳūsā. The high tower of the convent at ʔaṣr il-Benāt was spanned in its uppermost storey by two arches set out from the walls on deep brackets. What other use could these arches have had than to support the suspended logs of the *nāḳūs*?

But there are other towers in Northern Syria which certainly were not bell-towers, and which have peculiar features which make their purpose even more difficult to determine; one of them was erected above the diaconicon of the Church of Saint Mary at Shēkh Slēmān, others stand independently; sometimes there are several in one town, as at Kefr Ḥauwār.³⁸⁷ They

have two striking peculiarities, a chamber with small windows and cupboards in the top storey, and overhanging constructions, like latrinae, in the same storey. There are two sorts of overhanging closets, one, placed near an angle of the wall, which was unquestionably a latrina built out in corbels, and, in some cases certainly, in others probably, connected with the ground by a conduit of clay pipe; the other, very much smaller, placed directly over the entrance on the ground floor, which was certainly not a latrina. There are two towers, one at Kfellūsīn and the other at il-Burdj, which have both of these fixtures. These were almost certainly not watch-towers, for they are often so placed that the view would be better from other buildings near by, or from hills in the immediate vicinity, and, as I have said, there are often more than one in the same place. I believe that these were the towers of the hermits who imitated Saint Simeon to the extent of separating themselves from the world by living shut up in towers instead of being exposed upon pillars. If this surmise be warranted, the latrinae are self-explained, and the other overhanging feature, which occurs only in towers that have no windows, was the fixture by which the hermit pulled up his supplies. One of the Arab poets of the sixth century sings of the Christian monk in his *menerah*, whose night-lamp shines far out over the desert. The word *menerah* means, among other things, a lighthouse and a minaret; therefore it is probable that the poet was referring to one of these same towers which was the retreat of some holy man.

2. INTERIOR ACCESSORIES.

The churches of Syria have been in ruins for centuries. So long as they provided shelter, they were used as stables and sheepfolds for the Arabs. Some of them are occasionally employed for these purposes even now. A few of them were fortified by the Arabs of the later Middle Ages; others were the prey of wanton destroyers. It is thus no wonder that there are so few remains of either church furniture or of those fixtures which were of more delicate construction. Time and the elements have had full sway; man has aided in the despoilation; and yet fragments have been preserved from which much of the church furniture and many of the smaller fixtures may be restored, and from these it is possible to reconstruct, quite elaborately, the interior aspect of many of these early Syrian churches. In some cases it is possible only to

argue the former presence of a detail from the existence of its complement, in others the detail itself is present. The details of interior furnishing that are represented by fragments, or other certain indications, are as follows: the altar with its ciborium, the throne and the seats for the clergy, the chancel, possibly the ambon, the exedra at the west end of the nave and opposite to the apse, the water basin and the font, besides cupboards, staircases and other necessary adjuncts.

The Alter and Ciborium.

The location of the altar is established by the finding of fallen supports of its canopy; only one slab of an altar has as yet been found in an apse, and other slabs are presumed to have been parts of altars entirely from their form and the decoration upon them. It

³⁸⁷ P. II, B. p. 231.



Ill. 212. Zêrzîta.

naturally would be assumed that the altar and ciborium, in the apsidal churches, stood in the centre of the semicircle of the apse. This is proven to have been the case by the discovery of four fallen columns in the apse of the church at iṭ-Ṭûbā; but it is not certain that the altar, in rectangular sanctuaries, stood below the chancel arch. In fact, the evidence of the ruins is to the contrary. The only standing ciborium in Central Syria is in a small rectangular chapel at Zêrzîta that was not part of a church. Here it was placed against the wall (Ill. 212). Two columns attached to the ends of short walls carry an architrave between them and form supports for a canopy. In a number of rectangular sanctuaries there are holes in the east wall and usually two windows with sufficient space between them to have accommodated an altar and ciborium in this position.

The fragment which I take to be part of an altar, because it was found directly in the centre of the apse, was found at Umm it-Tuwêneh, in Northeastern Syria. It is a slab of basalt, 1.33 m. long, .82 m. wide, and .25 m. thick. The face is highly finished. Its sole ornament is a circle about a sunken disc in which a monogram is carved in relief; the monogram spells the name Stephanos.³⁸⁸ Near each angle of the slab is a hole, 10 cm. square and 10 cm. deep. The ends are not finished like the ends of panels of a chancel rail and, for this reason, as well as on account of its position, I believe it to have been part of the altar of the church. The presence of a thick, short column, — a plain cylindrical drum about 80 cm. high —, in the centre of the apse in several churches of the eastern region, suggests that another form of altar may have been a table with a single support.³⁸⁹

The columns of the ciborium at iṭ-Ṭûbā (Ill. 213) consisted of a tall, square pedestal 90 cm. high and 30 cm. square, surmounted by a slender Ionic column; all are cut from a single piece of basalt. Two adjoining sides of the pedestal have simple incised panels and



Ill. 213. Ciborium. iṭ-Ṭûbā.

the other two have sockets to receive slabs. The base of the column consists of a larger and smaller torus.

Four slender columns of the Corinthian order, in white limestone, were found near the apse of the South Church at il-Anderîn, which is built of basalt. Columns, more slender than the columns of the nave arcade, have been found in a number of churches in Northern Syria. A slender column with twisted flutings was found in the ruins of the church at Simdj in the Ḥaurân. It is probable, however, that the ciborium of stone was the exception rather than the rule in Syrian churches.

The Throne and Seats.

The existence of a bishop's throne in the churches of Syria would be a natural assumption. The proof of it, in one case, at least, is found in an inscription on the parapet of the choir in the long basilical church at Zebed, which reads, *Rabûlā made the throne*; but of the form of this throne, or of any throne in Syria, we have, as yet, no notion. In many of the churches of Southern Syria, notably in the West, North and Southwest Churches at Umm idj-Djimâl, and in Saint George at Zor'ali, there is found a ledge of solid masonry, 50 cm. high and 60 cm. deep, extending all around the curve of the apse, which must have been a bench for the presbyters and deacons. There are indications of such a ledge in several of the churches of Northern Syria, but not well preserved examples. On the other hand, there are stone benches, — well carved seats with backs and arms, long enough to accommodate three persons comfortably, in a number of churches in Northern Syria; but these are not always found in the same position. In the church at Kefr Nabō, and in the church of Saint Mary at Shêkh Slēmân, this bench occupies the middle of the east

³⁸⁸ P. II, B. p. 11, Ill. 7.

³⁸⁹ Joseph Braun, *Der Christliche Altar*, I, p. 129 f. Such an altar was found in place by Professor Butler in the apse of a little church that was excavated at Sardis in Asia Minor (Butler, *Sardis* I, Ill. 120).



Ill. 214. Chapel with Bema. Burdj Hêdar.

wall of the prothesis, or at least, of the chamber on the south of the apse which opens by an arch into the nave. In such a position it holds the place where we should expect to find the altar, if an altar was a necessary adjunct to a prothesis. In the West Church of Baḳirhā a similar bench stands between the second and third columns from the apse on the north side of the nave, facing the south. This would appear to be in the choir, but no other remains of a choir exist.

The Chancel and Choir.

It is evident that in the majority of the Syrian churches the floor of the apse, or presbyterium, was raised above the floor level of the nave, and that the limits of the presbyterium were often extended forward of the chancel arch by a sort of platform, — the *bema*. The limit of the bema was marked by a solid parapet or chancel rail; but there are no remains whatever of a tall iconastasis. In some cases the elevation of the bema was considerable, regardless of the length of the nave; in others it was no more than a single step, not over 20 cm. high. In the small churches a slight elevation was the rule; but an exception is found at Burdj Hêdar (Ill. 214), where the floor of the rectangular sanctuary and bema, .75 m. deep in front of the arch, is raised 62 cm. above the floor of

the nave and approached by three steps. In the chapels at Surḳanyā and Ḳaṣr Iblisū, a single step extends across the nave at a distance of from 1.30 to 1.05 m. from the arch. Grooves in the walls at either side, just behind the line of the step, show where the end of the parapet or rail fitted into the wall. In the chapel at Kfêr an arch within the rail opened into the prothesis, which was built out from the south side of the chapel. In the chapel at Sitt ir-Rûm, where there are no side chambers, a bema 4.32 m. wide and 1.28 m. deep, extends out in front of the chancel arch; at the angles of the platform there are shallow sockets, forming a right angle, to receive the solid stone *cancellus*, or rail. Bemas quite similar to this are found also in the chapels of Dêr Sim'ân and Bâtûtā; but in both of these buildings there is a doorway on either side of the platform leading to a chamber beside the sanctuary. In some of the larger basilicas the difference in level between the floor of the sanctuary and that of the nave was important. In the great church at Hâss (Ill. 135), for instance, where neither floor is now to be seen, but where there is other evidence, the bases of the two eastern piers of the nave arcades are set 1.20 m. above the level of the thresholds of the doorways in the aisle, showing that there at least six steps. The bema here extends across

the entire width of the church. In the church at ʔalab Lauzeh this difference is not so great as would appear from Plates 122 and 126 of *La Syrie Centrale*, where it is shown as a metre or more, requiring eight steps. The actual height of this bema, which extends two metres in front of the arch, is 60 cm. There are sockets for the ends of the chancel rail in both side walls. There is an entrance to the diaconicon on the north side within the rail and a doorway for the prothesis outside the rail, at the foot of the steps. The sanctuary in the smaller basilicas appears to have been elevated usually only one step above the floor of the nave. The best preserved example of this class is at Kharâb Shems (*Ill.* 31), where the platform extends forward of the apse arch to within a metre of the first columns of the nave arcade. The pier on the south side of apse is brought forward 60 cm. beyond the other, leaving a narrow space between it and the south post of the chancel rail. At Simkâr both piers are built out into the nave, forming side walls 2.10 m. deep for the bema. The chancel rail is placed between the ends of these walls. Another example of deeply protruding piers or responds on either side of the bema is at Serdjibleh. In the church at Serdjillâ a chancel rail was placed in front of the arch of the chapel, on the north side of the apse. In the church of the Holy Apostles at Iʔdjâz, in Northeastern Syria, the chancel rail is carried across a central aisle 8 m. wide, at a distance of only 1.50 m. from the arch. Nowhere in all these basilical churches are there any remains, or even suggestion, of a high iconostasis, with or without columns, although several writers assume the former existence of such a feature. The only detail resembling an iconostasis was found in the little chapel at Bānaḳfûr,³⁹⁰

I have seen only one example in Syria of an enclosed space in the eastern end of the central aisle.³⁹¹ This

was in the basilica at Zebed, one of those churches in Northeastern Syria which was built in large part of sun-baked brick. At the base of the sixth column from the apse, on the North side, a stone parapet, like a chancel rail with an opening in the middle, extends almost across the central aisle, stopping about two metres short of the south colonnade where it turns to the west. The whole nave is buried a metre deep, and it was extremely difficult to excavate in the dry, sandy soil, but I was able to uncover the entire east face of this section of the parapet and to find that the enclosure was to the west of it, because the ornament was confined to the east face of the parapet, and the parapet itself turns westward at the southeast angle. There is a groove in the west side of the north post. How large the choir may have been I do not know, by reason of the difficulty of excavation, but it is plain from the excavated part that this choir at least was not centred with the central aisle and that there was a passage between it and the colonnade on the south side.

A unique form of choir (*Ill.* 215), and one that would mark a special type of church were it not the only example, was found in Northeastern Syria among the ruins of the South Church at Kerrâtîn.³⁹² In front of the rectangular sanctuary and between the two long and narrow side chambers is a partition wall with a doorway in it that enclosed a choir 5.55 m. long and 8 m. wide. How high this wall may have been it is impossible to say.

*The Exedra.*³⁹³

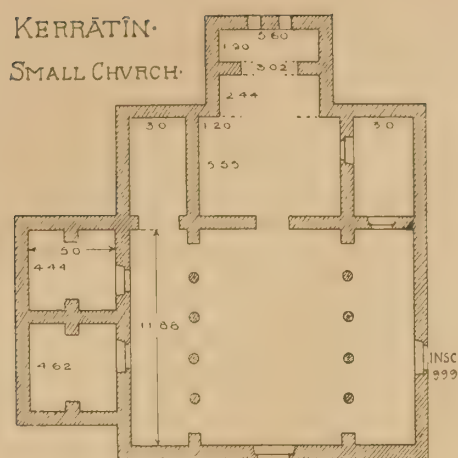
There is found in a number of the churches of Northern and Northeastern Syria an interior detail which, for lack of a better term, I have called the exedra, from its analogy to a detail so designated in the well known ancient plan of the convent of Saint

³⁹⁰ Cf. p. 75, *Ill.* 77.

³⁹² *P.* II, B. p. 75, *Ill.* 80.

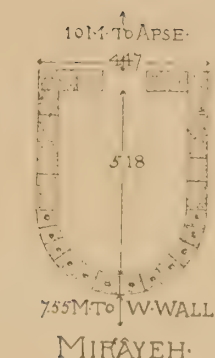
³⁹³ Recent excavations in the Sergios Basilica at Reṣâfah, (H. Spanner und S. Guyer, *Rusafa*, Tafel 17), have disclosed in the middle of the nave what was, in all probability, a choir, which in its form and position suggests that the so-called *exedras* found by Professor Butler in many of the churches of Northern and Northeastern Syria, were choirs, or parts of choirs. The choir at Reṣâfah consisted of a rectangular platform, 10.30 m. long, 7 m. wide and 1.30 m. high, which was mounted by a flight of steps at the east end, facing the sanctuary, and was terminated at its west end by a much lower semicircle or exedra, that was only 80 cm. high. Along the sides of the rectangular platform were narrow, vertical grooves in which were set red marble pillars that probably formed a balustrade, by means of panels between them, along the top of the platform. These pillars had plinth blocks, bases, channeled shafts and acanthus caps. The exedra, which seems to have had no obvious relation with the higher, rectangular platform, had a moulded face of polished marble around its curved sides which dropped down in two steps, on both sides, where the exedra abutted the platform. The top of this exedra had two semicircular benches of solid masonry, a metre wide and about a metre apart, of which the outer bench was the face of the exedra rising above its marble floor; and in the centre was a semicircular platform of the same height as the two benches, or low walls. Although Guyer suggests that the exedra was merely a raised platform for a statue of Saint Sergios, it seems to me more likely that it was an actual semicircle of seats. Certainly it was not a mere addition to the rectangular platform, as he implies, for the exedra was a feature in the fifth and sixth century churches of Syria. It is the rectangular platform which is odd in Syrian architecture, as Professor Butler found no evidence of such a platform in front of any of the exedras. It is to be noted that the Reṣâfah exedra, without the platform, is placed in the nave at relatively the same position as the other Syrian exedras, which have space in front of them for such a platform. Whether the raised platform at Reṣâfah was an exception, or whether in the other Syrian churches there had been platforms of rectangular shape in front of the exedras, it is impossible to say. But the Reṣâfah example makes it clear, I think, that all the Syrian exedras were either choirs or parts of choirs.

³⁹¹ Cf. Preface, note 1.



Ill. 215. South Church, Plan.

Gall.³⁹⁴ As the name would imply, the exedra consists of a semicircular wall which is situated opposite to the apse, in the main aisle, a little west of the middle of the church (*Ill.* 31). The wall, at least all that has been preserved of it in any church, is only one course, 55 cm. high and of about the same thickness. The diameter of the semicircle is a little less than that of the chancel arch. The walls at the ends of the semicircle are prolonged in parallel lines to points on the tangent of a circle described within the exedra. Here both walls are returned inward at right angles, leaving a gateway about one metre wide between them. This front wall with its gateway, in the few preserved examples, is on a line that evenly bisects the nave at the centre of the middle intercolumniation. There is thus a large space between the front wall of this enclosure and the chancel, a somewhat smaller space between the exedra and the west wall of the church, and a narrow passage on either side between it and the supports of the nave arcade. I cannot say in how large a proportion of the Syrian churches this exedra may have existed, nor can I deny that it may have been a fixture in all of them. I have found two examples in the Northern and two in the Northeastern region, where as much as I have described is still in situ. There are three other churches in Northern Syria where traces of exedras may be seen; at Kharâb Shems and in the East Church at Kalôta, both in the Djebel Sim'ân, and in the East Church at Dêhes, in the Djebel Bârîsha. In all these churches, and in one at il-Firdjeh in Northeastern Syria, the walls are complete in one course. At Mir'ayah (*Ill.* 216), which is also in the Northeastern district, where nothing is visible in the ruins of the church except the lower part of the apse and an exedra as complete as any of the others, we find the additional details of sockets,



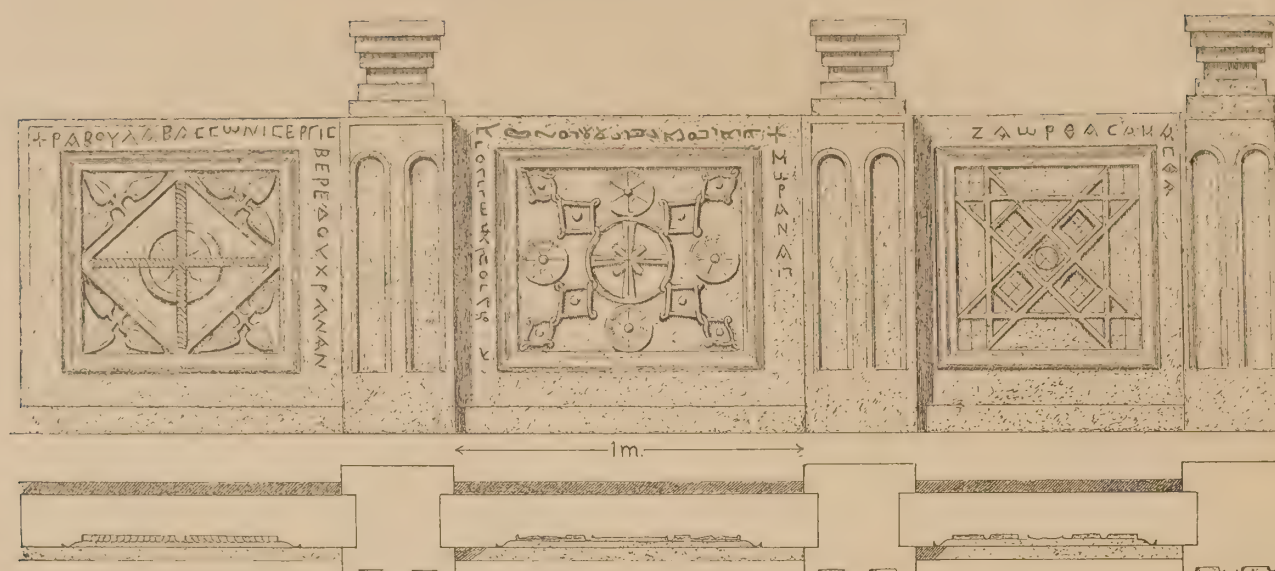
Ill. 216. *Exedra.*

10 cm. square and about 30 cm. apart, in the top of the wall. These holes were undoubtedly made to hold the uprights for a rail or screen, either of wood or metal. In each of the examples in the North, the interior and the exterior of the exedra are paved with slabs of stone or with mosaic, on the same level. In the two churches of the Northeastern region a mosaic pavement was found in the exedra and in the rest of the nave. At Ǧalb Lauzeh a semicircle is plainly executed in the paving stones of the nave just west of the spot where we would look for an exedra, but this semicircle is flush with the rest of the pavement. In the middle of the nave of the church of Djerâdeh, in the Djebel Riḥā, there appears a low wall; but the whole interior is so full of débris that a satisfactory description of the semicircle would be impossible without much difficult excavation.

The Cancellus.

The chancel rail itself, and the other choir rail, are designed on practically the same model, that of a row of stone posts about 30 cm. square, 1.20 m. high and 76 cm. to a metre apart, connected by solid slabs of stone, 80 cm. to 90 cm. high and 20 cm. thick (*Ill.* 217). The slabs, or panels, are let into the sides of the posts and often into the step on which the parapet rests. The ornamental features of the chancel rail are described in the chapter on ornament. The opening through the chancel into the sanctuary was a little wider than one panel, that is to say, from 1.10 m. to 1.30 m. wide, so that two persons walking abreast could easily pass through. This gate was placed in the middle, but there seems to have been another opening on one side or the other, between the end post and the pier beside the apse; while the pier on the diaconicon side of the bema often shows a socket for the end of a panel of the rail, the outside pier has none. Ordinarily there were two panels on either side of the opening, facing the nave, and one on the

394 Lenoir, *Architecture monastique*, p. 24.



Ill. 217. Parapet of Choir. Zebed.

return at each side. The choir at Zebed has five panels facing the apse, but only one of the panels on the return was excavated.

The Ambon.

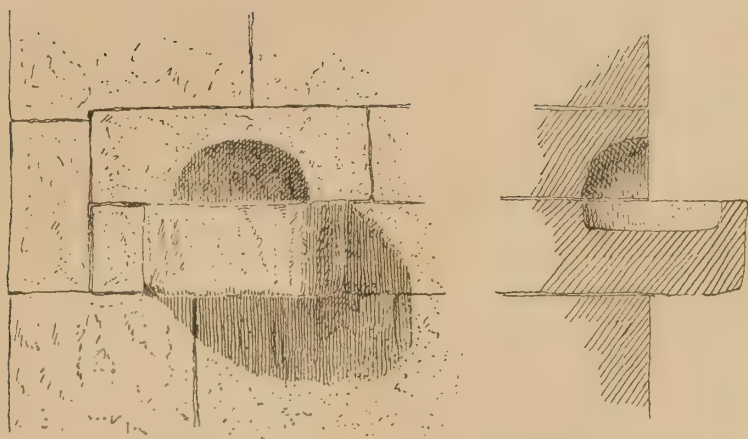
There is no evidence that ambons built of stone in the form known in other countries were used in the early churches of Syria; but these, if there were any, may easily have perished with all the other furniture of these churches. I have suggested that the small balconies high up in the wall on either side of the bema of the church of ʔalb Lauzeh may have been used for the same purpose as ambons. These balconies are placed in front of small doorways which open out of the rooms which form the upper storey of the prothesis and diaconicon.

The Stoup, Piscina, etc.

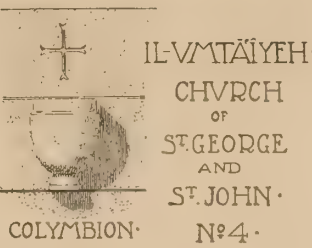
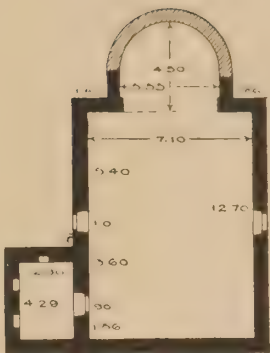
There are several forms of basins for water in various positions in the churches of Syria. Their purpose is not always clear. Some of them are recesses in niches, others are corbelled out from a wall or pier. From their location, those outside the churches beside the portals would seem to have served the purpose of the *colymbion* of the Greek church and the *benitier* of the Roman churches of Europe; while those within the sanctuary, or near the site of an altar, appear to have been *piscinae* for the washing of the sacred vessels or the hands of the clergy. I have seen no example of the *colymbion* beside a doorway in any of the churches of Northern Syria; but in the Haurân they were not unusual. To the right of the great west portal of the southern half of the Double Church at Umm idj-Djimâl there is a perfectly preserved water-basin of simple form which is corbelled out from the exterior wall

(Ill. 218). It is a large basin protruding 30 cm. from the wall. The receptacle for water is 24 cm. in diameter and about 10 cm. deep. An exactly similar basin was found in the church of Masechos in the same city, but it is in a somewhat different location, being at the extreme left of the west portal, at the angle of the church. This church stands beside the east gate of the city, and the *colymbion* is just within the city gate. A more ornamental stoup was found beside the right jamb of a small north portal in the church of Saints George and John at il-Umtā'iyeh (Ill. 219). The corbel here is carved in the form of a vase or urn, the basin is very shallow, not over 4 cm. deep. Above the basin a simple cross is well carved in the wall. A similar stoup was found in the ruins of a church at Umm il-ʔuṭṭên. The only well preserved stoup in Northern Syria was found in the West Church at Ksêdjbeh. It is inside the church to the left of the apse, on the face of the pier at the end of the north arcade of the nave (Ill. 220). This is of a very different type from those described above, the basin being partly set back in a niche 40 cm. high and 25 cm. wide.

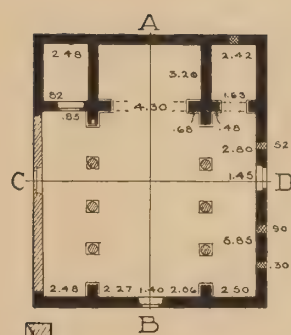
There are many small niches in the Northern churches that look more like *piscinae* than these which I have just described. They have no brackets in front of them, and only a few have basins carved at the bottom. In the chapel at Burdj Hedâr there is a niche with a basin beside the steps of the bema on the right side. This niche is 64 cm. wide and 88 cm. high. Small niches, either round-topped or square-headed, are found in various parts of these churches. In many instances they appear at one side of the sanctuary and often in the prothesis. In a number of chapels we find them on one side or both sides of



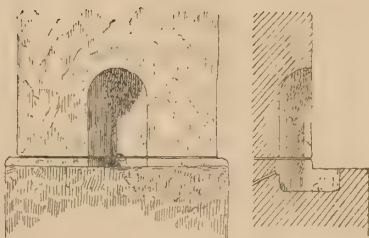
Ill. 218. Colymbion. Umm idj-Djimâl.



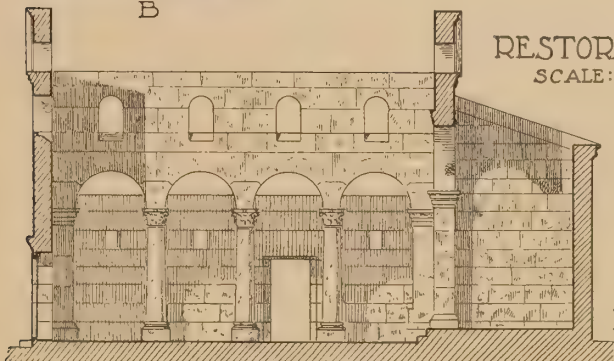
Ill. 219.



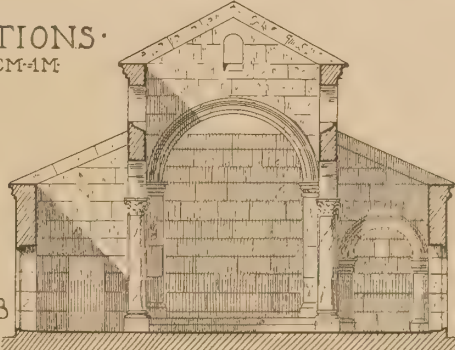
KSÊDJBEH· WEST CHVRCH·



COLYMBION· SCALE· 5CM·=1M·



SECTION B-A·



SECTION C-D·

RESTORATIONS· SCALE· 5CM·=1M·

Ill. 220.

the chancel arch; at Ẕalb Lauzeh, on the inner face of the second pier from the chancel. In the last example there seems to have been a basin in the square niche, but it has been badly broken.

Cupboards.

It remains only to mention the cupboards, closets or wardrobes that were found in almost all the chambers that we have identified as diaconica, and often in the prothesis as well. These are usually about a metre wide, 80 cm. deep and from 1.20 to 2 metres high. In many cases there are one or more grooves cut in the side walls for sliding shelves of wood, and a majority of them have a recess carved around the top and sides to receive a wooden door. As there are no visible sockets or holes at the edges for a lock or hinges, but holes on either side that may have held L-shaped irons, it may be that these doors were fastened by bars. One of these closed recesses was undoubtedly the place in which the bread and wine for the eucharistic service was kept. It may be that in Syria the elements were kept in the diaconicon, though in the west they are believed to have been preserved in the prothesis.

In addition to the articles of interior furnishing which

have been described we must assume that rich hangings played an important part in these Syrian churches. In many examples in which the walls separating the sanctuary from its side chambers are omitted, there are sockets in the walls which show that there were wooden fixtures for the support of these hangings. These hangings, however, did not supply the only warm note of colour in these interiors. In several cases in which the slabs of a stone roof are still preserved, the faded outlines of a painted pattern may still be seen. These faint traces, with the fragments of mosaic pavements that still exist in many churches, indicate the richness of the colour scheme. It is certain that the interior surfaces of most walls were covered with plaster and painted. Cases in which any of the plaster or colour is preserved in the church proper are extremely rare, owing to the exposure to which the walls of larger rooms are open, and are confined to the desert region south of the Ḥaurân where the weather is more mild; but in the smaller compartments of the dependencies, as in the lower rooms of the tower of the convent of Ẕaṣr il-Benât, in Northern Syria, a fine grained cement, laid over a coarser coat of plaster, is to be seen with a coloured design in brown, yellow and green.

CHAPTER IX

ORNAMENTAL DETAILS: 1. MOULDINGS. 2. COLUMNS AND PIERS. 3. CHANCELS AND PARAPETS.
4. TRACERY. 5. SCULPTURE. 6. MOSAIC.

THE ornament of the Christian architecture of Syria is its chief distinguishing characteristic. It is this, perhaps more than the lithic character of its construction, that sets this architecture apart as a style by itself. By means of it we are able approximately to fix the dates of many buildings that are without dated inscriptions. The ornamental details of the Syrian churches consist of the usual carved decoration of exterior and interior mouldings, capitals, chancel rails, etc. of figure sculpture, though its use

was very limited, of the mosaic ornament of the pavements, and of the wall painting. But the various details of ornament differ so widely, both in their forms and in the methods in which they are applied, in the three different regions into which we have divided Central Syria, that it will be necessary, for the sake of clearness, to discuss the ornament of the churches in each region separately, and, as the ornament develops and becomes more elaborate from century to century, to treat the subject in a more or less chronological order.

I. MOULDINGS

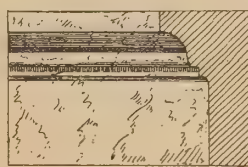
Northern Syria.

THE use of mouldings was more general in Northern Syria than in either of the other districts. In the early period, — the fourth and early fifth centuries —, the mouldings of the North were of simple profile, though all the convex and concave forms were used, together with flat fascia and bevels. In the Northeast, the bevel and torus were practically the only forms employed in the earlier churches and, in the South, the bevelled face was used almost exclusively, except in cases where old material from Pagan buildings was introduced. This statement applies, of course, to mouldings carved in stone; those executed in plaster, in the churches of the Northeast and South, were undoubtedly of more varied profiles. In the earliest churches of Northern Syria, mouldings were employed on the exterior as follows: as crowning features, or cornices, of all aisle and clearstorey walls, as raking cornices in the gables and lean-tos, the cornice being generally carried below the pediment and half pediments.

Mouldings occur also occasionally on the jambs and lintel of doorways, even in the earlier buildings. The cornices have profiles very similar to that of the cornice of one of the best preserved temples of this region, — the temple of Burdj Bākirhā —, a building of the second century A.D. The profile presents a free and graceful cyma-recta with a broad band above and often a narrow fillet below (*Ill.* 221). Cornices of this profile were found in the early churches at Fāfirtīn, dated 372 A.D., at Bātūtā, Kharāb Shems and else

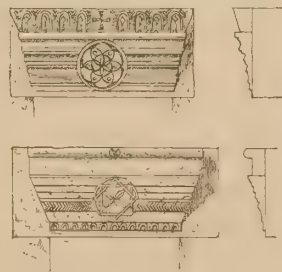
where; the only notable difference between this form of cornice and that of the second century being that the uppermost band is wider.

The majority of the portals in early churches, as at Simkhār, Fāfirtīn and Bātūtā are quite plain, having monolithic jambs and lintels with no ornament save two or three crosses and perhaps an inscription. Other portals, as in the North Church at Bānḡūsā and the West Church at Burdj Hēdar, have, by way of a door-cap, a trapezoid in relief (*Ill.* 222), divided into bands and crowned either by a bevelled face and fascia or by a simple cymation. This kind of lintel decoration is quite common in the domestic architecture of the fourth century. Occasionally a set of mouldings of more or less elaborate profile is used to crown a succession of bands in these Syrian door-caps. On other examples a broad band occupies the place of two or three narrow ones (*Ill.* 222-B), and is ornamented with crosses or various forms of discs usually embracing the sign of the cross, the monogram of Christ and other symbols (*Ill.* 139). The trapezoidal door-cap



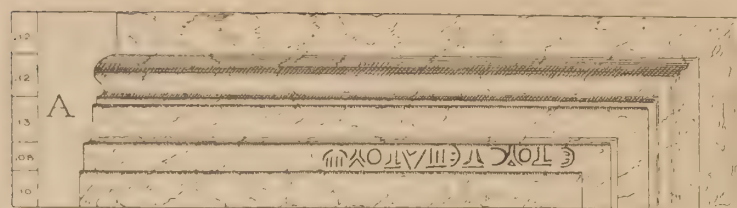
CORNICE.

Ill. 221.
Tomb. Bābutṭā.

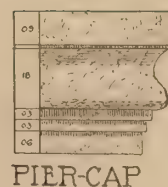


Ill. 222.
Trapezoidal Door-caps.

Early Churches in Syria



Ill. 223. Portal, Bā'ûdeh, Church, 392 A.D.



Ill. 224. Burdj Hedar, East Church.

survived all through the history of church architecture in Syria and, as we shall see, was often adorned in later centuries with elaborate carving. Frame mouldings, when employed for the portals of earlier churches, were executed in relief and were of quite simple profile, — two or three fascia below a cyma-recta surmounted by a broad band —, as in the portal of the church at Kharâb Shems. In the mouldings of the south portal of the church at Bā'ûdeh, dated 392 A.D., a narrow cyma-reversa is inserted between the fascia (*Ill. 223*).

The interior mouldings, consisting of the archivolt of the apse and the caps of the piers at the ends of the nave arcades repeat the simple profile of the portal mouldings; the archivolt has usually three or four bands and a cyma-recta; the caps have two or three bands of unequal width and a cyma-recta (*Ill. 32*). Even in the earliest churches the lip of the cyma-recta is often carved with a narrow fillet which presently becomes a bevelled fillet; for this detail of profile appears even in certain Pagan buildings of Syria. The mouldings of the archivolts are often returned at the springing of the arch, to be carried outward and stopped against the first arches of the nave on either side (*Ill. 32*), showing that the moulded archivolt is a survival of the arcuated entablature of buildings of the second century in Syria. An impost moulding is frequently carried around the apse below the springing of the half dome.

The dated churches of the early part of the fifth century present more mouldings, and a greater variety of profiles, than are found in the dated churches of the fourth century, or in those churches that are to be grouped with them by reason of similarity of detail. Crowning mouldings, such as cornices, retain the early form with only slight changes in profile; but the mouldings of the portals and of the apse arches are considerably enriched, while greater variety is introduced into the profiles of piers and responds. The window openings are left unadorned during the greater part of the century, though a single instance of a window moulding was found with the date 407 upon it. The cornice in two dated churches of the first quarter of the fifth century, namely, the churches of

Ksêdjbeh, dated 414, and Dâr Kîta, dated 418 A.D., are of similar profile, showing practically the same form as the cornices of the late fourth century churches, but having in addition only the bevelled fillet. The innovations introduced in the mouldings of portals of the fifth century consist chiefly in the insertion of the bead-and-reel and of bands of ornament. Various forms of beaded members are used to separate the recessed fascias; a band of bay leaf ornament is inserted between the small cyma-reversa and the larger cyma-recta, while the outermost fascia is carved with interlacing fillets (*Ill. 225*). Many of the portals of the fifth century are provided with hood-mouldings which are of deep cyma-recta profile and are carved with acanthus leaves or anthemions. In this way the richness of the exterior ornament is centred upon one or two portals. A striking feature in the enrichment of the mouldings of doorways and arches, beginning with the fifth century, is the cresting of a group of mouldings with a decoration of cusps, forming an inverted arcuation above the outermost member (*Ill. 226*). This cusping is often effected by breaking a fillet into alternating curves and angles, and the inter-spaces, triangular and semi-circular, are frequently adorned with a delicate leaf or flower, as in the great portal at Babis̄ka. This cresting was applied not only to rectangular openings but to chancel arches, windows and other arched openings.

In the interior, during the fifth century, we find the classic bead-and-reel inserted in the apse arch below the cyma-recta, and the cyma itself occasionally enlarged and carved with anthemions or acanthus leaves, as at Ẓaṣr il-Benât. Change is also seen in the treatment of pier-caps, where two or three fascia crowned with a cyma-recta often appear, as in earlier churches; but in many examples an ovolo or a cavetto is introduced (*Ill. 227*).

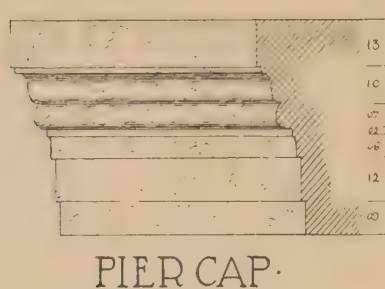
The fifth century had not closed before a great change came over the mouldings used in church architecture, changes not only of profile but also of method of application. The church of Saint Phokas at Bāṣūfân, dated in the year 492 A.D., has a base moulding and a moulded string course below the windows and window mouldings, in addition to cornices and portal



Ill. 225. East Doorway in South Wall. Ksêdjbeh, East Church.



Ill. 226. Doorway Showing Cusps. Silfâyâ.



PIER CAP.

Ill. 227. *Ḳaṣr Iblisū, West Church.*



Ill. 228. *Exterior Mouldings. Bāsūfān, Church of St. Phocas, 491/2 A.D*

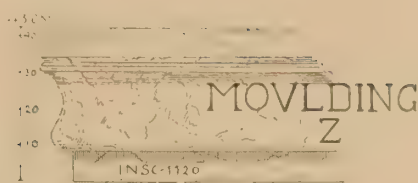
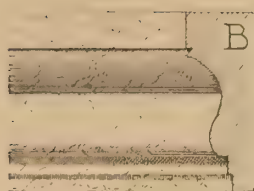
mouldings that had long been employed (Ill. 228). In this church we also find the earliest example, with a definite date, of the volute or spiral loop at the termination of mouldings, a detail so characteristic of the architecture of Northern Syria during the sixth century. With horizontal bands of mouldings, i. e. string-mouldings, came the introduction of pilasters at the angles and often along the face of the wall; though these were not employed with all base moulding and string courses. The pilasters are used with or without capitals, and the base mouldings are seldom broken out to form bases for them. In many instances the pilasters are used above and below the string course, as in Classic models (Ill. 229). Another curious innovation of this period was the execution of mouldings not in relief, but cut into the surface of the wall. Such mouldings are simply *incised* upon the ends of the stones that

formed an opening. This method was applied to window mouldings and string-courses, and even to portals, as we find in the church at Burdaklī; but it was most commonly employed for window mouldings above a string moulding in relief. The incised method was applied even to pilasters, which were represented by incised grooves with or without caps. The adoption of these new styles of ornament was not universal, for we find a church at Khirbit Ḥasan, dated by a Syriac inscription of the year 507 A. D. (Ill. 243), still plain, so far as base mouldings and string courses are concerned, and without even jamb mouldings for its portals. A window in the east wall, completely framed in a good set of mouldings, shows that poverty, perhaps more than unwillingness and ignorance, prevented greater enrichment in this church.

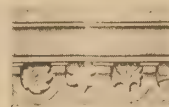
The cyma-recta in all these mouldings from the end



Ill. 229. *Incised mouldings and pilasters, Bākirhā, West Church and Baptistery from North East.*



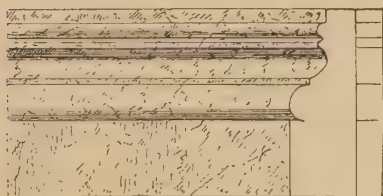
*Ill. 230. Mouldings: B, Khirbit Tēzin, 585 A.D.;
Z, Zerzītā, 530 A.D.*



A

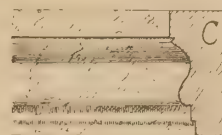
B

*Ill. 231. Modillion Cornices: A, ẖalʿat Simʿān;
B, ẖalb Lauzeh (after de Vogüé).*



BASE MOVLING

*Ill. 232. Dār Kītā, Church of
the Trinity.*



*Ill. 233. String course,
Khirbit Tēzin, 585 A.D.*

of the fifth century to the beginning of the seventh takes on a more S-like curve (*Ill. 230-B*). The lower outward curve often protrudes to the line of the upper terminating band and is sometimes deeply undercut below. (*Ill. 230-Z*). This alternation of profile is most noticeable in the cornices where a decided overhang is most desirable and where the projection of the lower curve tends to destroy this effect. A modillion cornice of very elaborate style was used in a few buildings of more than usual richness of detail. The modillions are of slight projection and the vertical lacunae were filled with leaves, stars or crosses. The cymation was richly adorned with acanthus leaves. This sort of cornice is found both in the exterior walls and in the chancel arch of the apses of the

church of Saint Simeon at ẖalʿat Simʿān and in the great arches of the octagon of the same church (*Ill. 231-A*).³⁹⁵ Above the mouldings of the chancel arch of the church of ẖalb Lauzeh a cornice is formed by a row of small conchas, richly carved, below a cyma-recta (*Ill. 231-B*). A similar kind of cornice appears as the crowning feature on the exterior of a number of apses, as at ʿArshin (*Ill. 133*).

The profile of the base mouldings is well adapted to its purpose and is not unlike Classic models (*Ill. 232*), consisting of a small upper and a large lower torus with a filleted scotia or cyma-reversa between them. The string courses (*Ill. 233*) are naturally of flat profile, consisting of two fascia and a cyma-recta with bevelled fillet below a broad band.

³⁹⁵ A modillion cornice also occurs on the archivolt of the arches in the diaconicon of the Sergios Basilica at Reşāfah (Sarre und Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise im Euphrat-und-Tigris-gebiet*, II, Abb. 35).



A

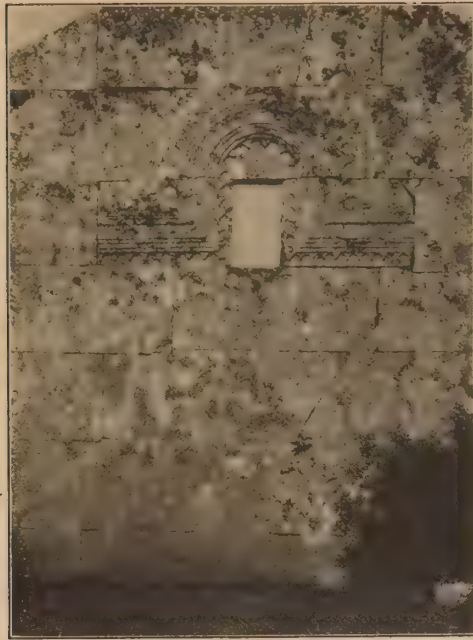


B

*Ill. 234. Windows: A, Bashmishli, House;
B, Ruwêhâ, South Wall of North Church.*

Mouldings were applied to windows in a great variety of ways during the sixth century. In one case a window is treated as an isolated detail of ornament; in another the mouldings serve to bind the openings together as a continuous band of decoration, like a frieze (*Ill. 229*). Single windows, either round topped or rectangular, may have mouldings which follow the lines of the opening (*Ill. 234*), or the mouldings may form a semi-circle above a rectangle (*Ill. 234-C*). These mouldings are rarely cut off at the level of the window sill; they

either form a complete frame (*Ill. 234-D*), or are returned a short distance and then cut off (*C*), or are twisted into volutes on either side of the opening (*E*). The window moulding often reproduces the profile of the string course. Indeed, the string moulding is frequently broken and carried up the jamb and over the arches of a row of windows, as at Khirbit Tēsîn; but in the majority of cases the string course is continuous, and the window moulding is either stopped against the string course or is looped from one opening to



C



D

*Ill. 234. Windows: C, Bāshakūh, House ;
D, il-Bārah, Tomb.*

another (*Ill. 229*). It is not unusual to find the window mouldings returned and carried along from one opening to another either directly above the string course or at the level of the arches, making a second string course (*Ill. 234-F*). The looping of a moulding from one window to another will be recognized as peculiar to the Syrian architecture of this period. The moulding seems to have been treated as a festoon or garland, rather than as a frame for the opening. Incised mouldings are most fantastically treated in a number of churches,

Early Churches in Syria.

as in the chapel at Brād (*Ill. 235*), where the window mouldings describe several loops in their course about the opening.

The mouldings of the portals are always independent of the base moulding and string course and are of different profile from either of them. They generally cut through the base course and terminate upon a projecting threshold; but it is almost as common to find the whole group of jamb mouldings twisted into volutes either above the base mould or at the level

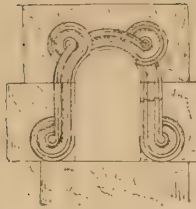


E



F

*Ill. 234. Windows: E, Dār Kītā, South Wall of South Church;
F, Kal'at Sim'ân, Northwest Corner of Northern Basilica of Church
of St. Simeon Stylites.*



Ill. 235. Window. Brâd,
South West Church.



Ill. 236. Doorway, Brâd,
Southwest Church.



A



B



C

Ill. 237. Lintels: A, Khirbit Tēzin, 585 A.D.;
B, Kaşr il-Benât;
C, Dâr Kūtā, 462 A.D.

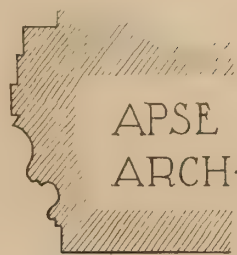
of the threshold (Ill. 229). The profiles of the jamb and lintel mouldings of doorways are varied in the sixth century by the introduction of a shallow scotia, a flat cavetto, reeds or a pulvinated band into the traditional group of mouldings. The portals of the sixth century churches were generally ornamented with some form of door-cap above the lintel mouldings. At times the incised mouldings are bent at the middle of the

lintel to describe a curve about a disc (Ill. 236). The hood moulding of the fifth century does not appear in the sixth; its place is taken by a variety of decorative features. The most common of these is a heavy ovolo carved with geometrical or foliate pattern (Ill. 237-A). Another form is a tall cavetto, quite Egyptian in form, carved with discs or leaves (B-C). A still simpler door-cap is a plain bevelled face adorned with

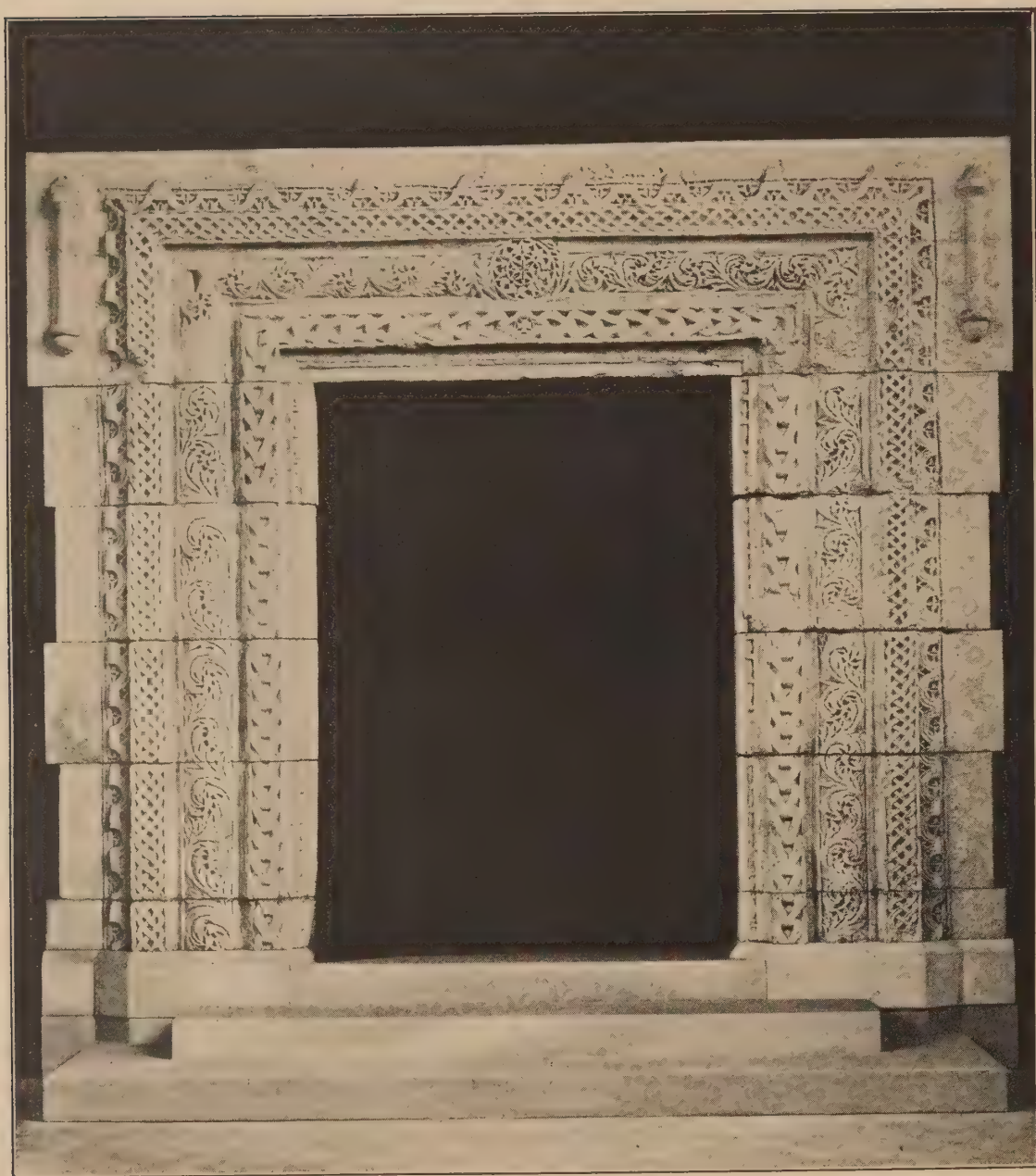


DETAIL OF PORTAL AT O

Ill. 238. *Pulvinated moulding,
Bābiskā, 480 A.D.*

APSE
ARCH.

Ill. 239. *Apse Arch, Bākirhā,
East Church, 546 A.D.*



Ill. 240. *Doorway. Bābiskā, Baptistry of the East Church (Photograph from a cast).*

flat decoration (*Ill.* 243). The rarest of these lintel ornaments, and one which suggests a Classic origin, is a pulvinated frieze of running acanthus crowned with a cymation. A lintel of this kind at Babiskā is among the more highly ornamented portals; it bears the date 480 A. D. (*Ill.* 238).

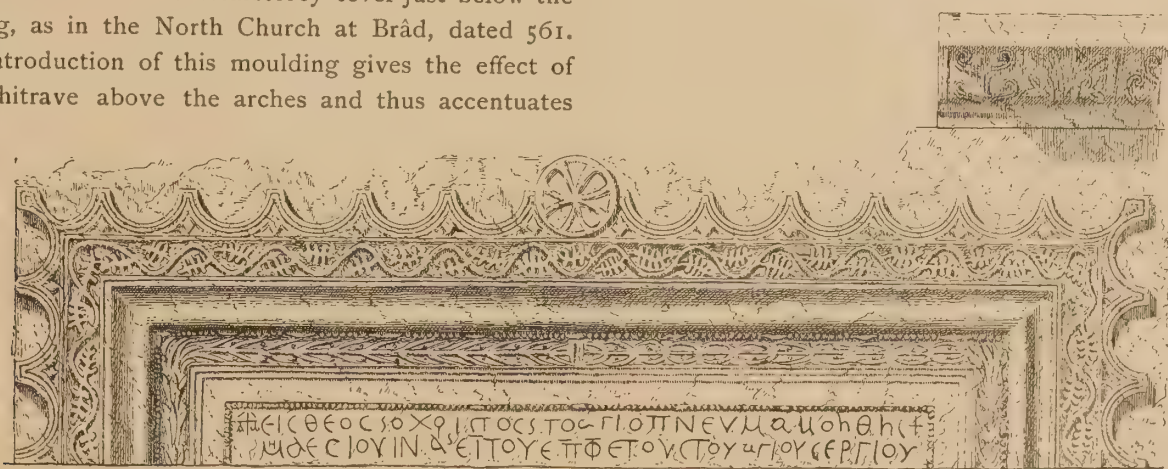
The architraves of the narthex and of the porches and colonnades at the side of the church were given mouldings of special profile. Like most of the architraves in the Christian architecture of Syria, these epistyle blocks were given mouldings which suggested at least two members of the Classical entablature; for the narrow bands of the lower part carry out the idea of a low architrave, while the salient moulding above them replaces the cornice, so that only the frieze is wanting. These mouldings of the straight architraves are often returned downward along the faces of the end walls of the narthex, as in Saint Mary's church in Shêkh Slēmān (*Ill.* 200), and occasionally they are returned downward a short distance and then terminate in spirals, as may be seen in the narthex of the East Church at Baḳirhā (*Ill.* 199). In cases in which piers are substituted for columns in a narthex, the piers are usually moulded at the top. In most instances these mouldings are not separate caps, but are executed upon the monolithic pier itself, and often on the outer face, as in the East Church at Baḳirhā (*Ill.* 199).

All the interior mouldings became more elaborate as the centuries advanced. The chancel arch of the East Church at Baḳirhā, dated 546, was enriched by the addition of a fine cyma-recta and a deeply curved ogee to its profile (*Ill.* 239). In a number of churches the arches of the nave arcade were adorned with mouldings, either in relief or incised, which were often returned in two angles upon the face of the stiltblocks. In the church of Ḳalb Lauzeh relief mouldings upon the archivolts of the main arcade were enriched with elaborate carving. A moulded string course appears in many churches at the clearstorey level just below the opening, as in the North Church at Brâd, dated 561. The introduction of this moulding gives the effect of an architrave above the arches and thus accentuates

the pseudo-classic tendency of the period. Almost all the corbels at the top of the clearstorey which carry the great rafters of the roof, are moulded on three sides.

THE CARVING OF MOULDING.

The embellishment of mouldings with finely carved foliate and geometrical patterns was largely practiced by the Christian artists of Northern Syria. The fashion of enriching moulded surfaces with carving, while never practiced in Southern Syria by the Christian builders, was very common during the Roman period. In the North, however, a very simple and severe style seems to have been in vogue until the fifth century; for the mouldings of all Pagan buildings in the North, one of which is dated as late as the year 250 A. D., depend for beauty of effect entirely upon grace and variety of profile. But during the fifth and sixth centuries in Northern Syria the Christian architecture becomes very rich in the carving of mouldings and surpasses even the later Pagan architecture of the Ḥaurân in the variety and elaborateness of its decorated mouldings (*Ill.* 240). It should be stated, however, that this kind of ornament was confined almost exclusively to the portals and archivolts of the apse. Since it is known that certain mouldings were painted with designs, it is not improbable that the carving was derived from this custom. One or more types of ornament were adapted to every variety of profile (*Ill.* 241). The fascia, as the outer member of a group of mouldings or as a crowning member, was adorned either with interlacing fillets studded with pellets or with a highly conventionalized grapevine; as an intermediate member the flat fascia received the bay leaf ornament, a braided pattern resembling the guilloche, a chain pattern, or a double chevron which may be taken to represent a conventional treatment of the palm. The heavy ovolo (*Ill.* 240) was enriched with a row of symbolic discs or was carved with a rich rinceau of acanthus having



Ill. 241. Moulding Decoration, Dâr Ḳâtā, West Doorway of Church of St. Sergius.



Ill. 242. Cusps. Entrance to Villa at Ruwêhâ.

a disc in the middle. The narrow ovolo bore slender leaves like the ivy and occasionally an imitation of the egg-and-dart, in which the dart was omitted. The wide cavetto, when used as a cap or cornice, displayed a row of erect acanthus leaves (*Ill. 237-B*); the narrow cavetto was usually left uncarved. The torus received twisted flutings or overlapping leaves. The cyma-recta was usually plain, except as a heavy cornice or hood-mould, when it was Classically treated either with anthemions and honey-suckle or with erect acanthus leaves and anthemions (*Ill. 241*). The cyma-reversa, the rarest of mouldings in the Christian architecture of Syria, was unadorned in all the examples I have seen. Classic ornament survived in pulvinated friezes wrought with acanthus rinceaux, in low dentil mouldings (*Ill. 237-C*), and in the bead-and-reel, of which there are many varieties. A peculiarly Oriental introduction was a cresting of inverted scallops, or blunt cusps, referred to above, which was added to groups of mouldings of all kinds, following the line of a moulded string course or running up the jambs and over the lintels of doorways and windows, or crowning the mouldings of an arch (*Ill. 242*). This ornament suggests the lotus-form borders of Assyrian patterns with the buds cut off.

The ornament of the splay-faced or bevelled trapezoidal door-cap is too varied to be fully described (*Ill. 243*), embracing, as it does, almost all of the above mentioned forms in addition to many naturalistic designs, such as the vine, the palm tree and the peacock. As a rule this ornament is treated in a colouristic technique, which, as a usual technique for the obviously unclassic trapezoidal door-cap, implies an Oriental tradition combining with the Hellenistic

forms to make up the rich decoration of these Syrian churches.

The hollow mouldings of main cornices and of architraves are frequently studded with bosses or rosettes in much the same manner as the star and ball-flower are applied to the mouldings of Tudor architecture in England (*Ill. 242*). It is not unusual to find a large symbolical disc applied to a group of mouldings; but the most peculiar treatment of mouldings is to be seen in several cornices where the lines are bent and all the members are stopped or bent to describe a minute semicircle, with no other apparent object than of breaking the monotony of a straight line with a playful leap (*Ill. 244*). The cyma-recta in these cases forms a small niche in the cornice, which is not without beauty of effect; but such whims cost the stone-cutter much labor, for great facility with the chisel was necessary to accomplish such tricks.

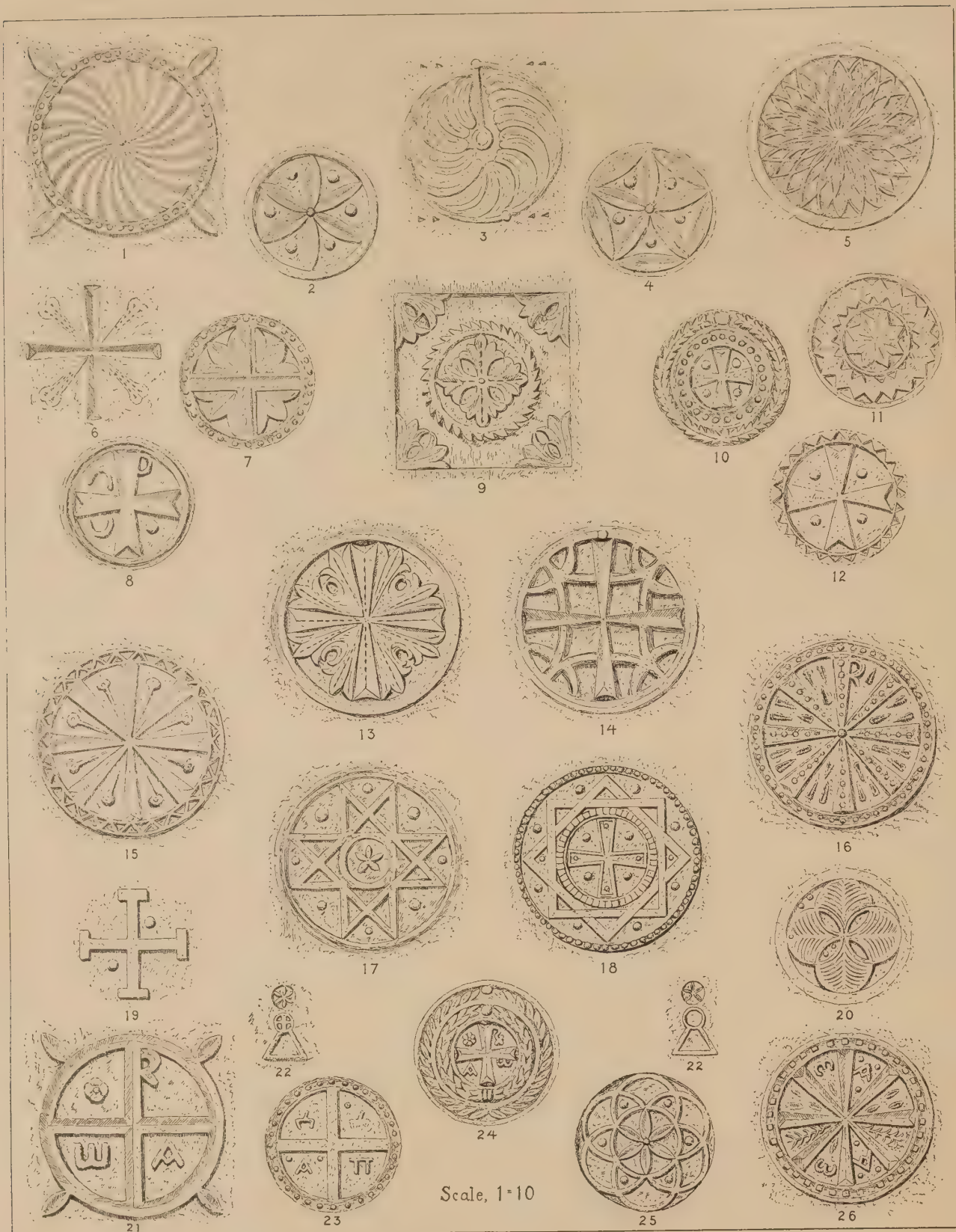
Pattern carving in relief, or incised work, in the churches of Northern Syria, consists in discs of more or less intricate design and in bands of finely wrought patterns. The discs (*Ill. 245*), which were not of Christian origin, being found in Pagan buildings, are peculiar to Syrian architecture. In the church ornament they are infused with Christian symbolism. Some of them are square, but the greater number are circular. The cross, in one form or another is the chief motive of each design; it is often converted into monograms of Christ by the addition of a P to the head of the cross. The quadrants between the cross and the circle are filled with various symbols, such as the lily, the rose, the dove, the lamb and the wafer; the enclosing circle is often a wreath incised or in relief. These discs were applied singly to the centre of a lintel, in pairs with



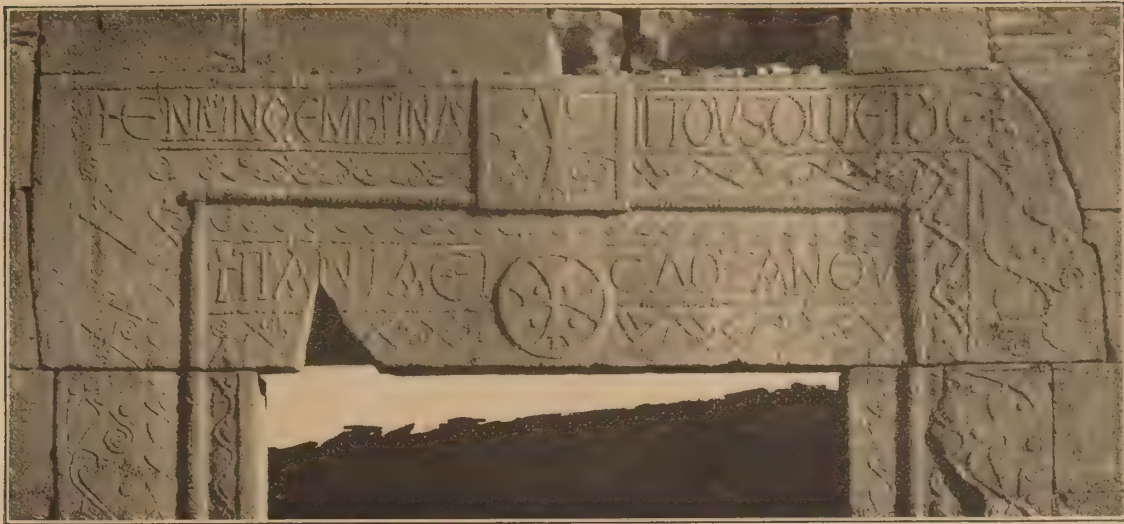
Ill. 243. Trapezoidal lintel Khirbit Hasan, 507 A.D.



Ill. 244. West Doorway. Bābiskā, Church of St. Sergios.

Ill. 245. *Types of Disks*

- | | | | | | |
|------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|
| 1 Dēr Sētā | 6 Kōkanāyā | 11 Khirbit Ḥasan | 16 Kōkanāyā | 21 'Arshīn | 26 il-Bārah |
| 2 Dēr Sētā | 7 Khirbit Ḥasan | 12 Bānḡūsā | 17 Dēhes | 22 Silfāyā | |
| 3 Dēr Sētā | 8 Bānḡūsā | 13 Dēr Sētā | 18 Dauwār | 23 Khirbit il-Khaṭīb | |
| 4 Kfēr | 9 Bānḡūsā | 14 Kōkanāyā | 19 Bānḡūsā | 24 Kalb Lauzeh | |
| 5 Dēr Sētā | 10 Dēr Sētā | 15 Kefr Kilā | 20 Bānaḡfūr | 25 Kfēr | |



Ill. 246. Lintel, Palace of Kaṣr ibn Wardân, 564 A.D.

one at each end of the lintel, in threes, or in long rows which are bound together across the lintel by vines or fillets. Often they are carved on a flat surface, but more frequently in church architecture they are used to adorn a trapezoidal door-cap, the keystone of the chancel arch and the middle of lintels.

NORTHEASTERN SYRIA.

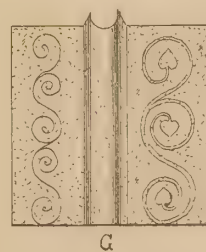
Mouldings, as I have said, are not common in the architecture of Northeastern Syria, except in those parts which lie farthest west where limestone is mixed with basalt and where mouldings in limestone, like those of Northern Syria, abound. Pattern carving for flat surfaces, on the other hand, is rich and plentiful, and as far as was possible seems to have taken the place of mouldings. I have found no fragment of a cornice in the basalt architecture of this region and the only mouldings which I know are arch mouldings and the mouldings of doorways and pier-caps. The arch mouldings usually consist of two or three fascias, of slight projection, below a torus, above which is a cavetto and a flat face. The keystone is enriched with a disc or a wreath encircling a cross. The only mouldings of the great basalt lintels of most of the portals is a large torus on a flat lintel which is carved with various kinds of ornament in rather low relief (*Ill. 246*). In some portals the torus is returned and carried down the jambs. Frequently this torus is produced by cutting away on either side of a bevel, so that the moulding is not really in relief (*Ill. 247*). The mouldings of pier-caps are generally of right lined profile, — a fascia and a bevel below a flat band. In a few churches, like the church of the Apostles at I^djaz, a cyma-recta, or an ovolo, is substituted for the bevel and is often carved (*Ill. 39*). Discs of simple

Early Churches in Syria.

pattern, usually a cross and circle in low relief with A and Ω and the ball ornament, appear on many lintels (*Ill. 248*). Arcuations in flat relief are used above or below the torus, and rows of small discs and interlacing fillets give further variety to the surface. The large torus is generally adorned with carving divided into sections by narrow bands which appear to encircle it (*Ill. 249*), the cyma-recta is occasionally enriched with foliate carving, and the flat surfaces are relieved by simple designs of the grapevine or the like. All the vegetable patterns in this region are executed in the most conventional manner. The grapevine, the commonest of these patterns, is frequently so stiff and rigid as to be almost unrecognizable (*Ill. 250*).

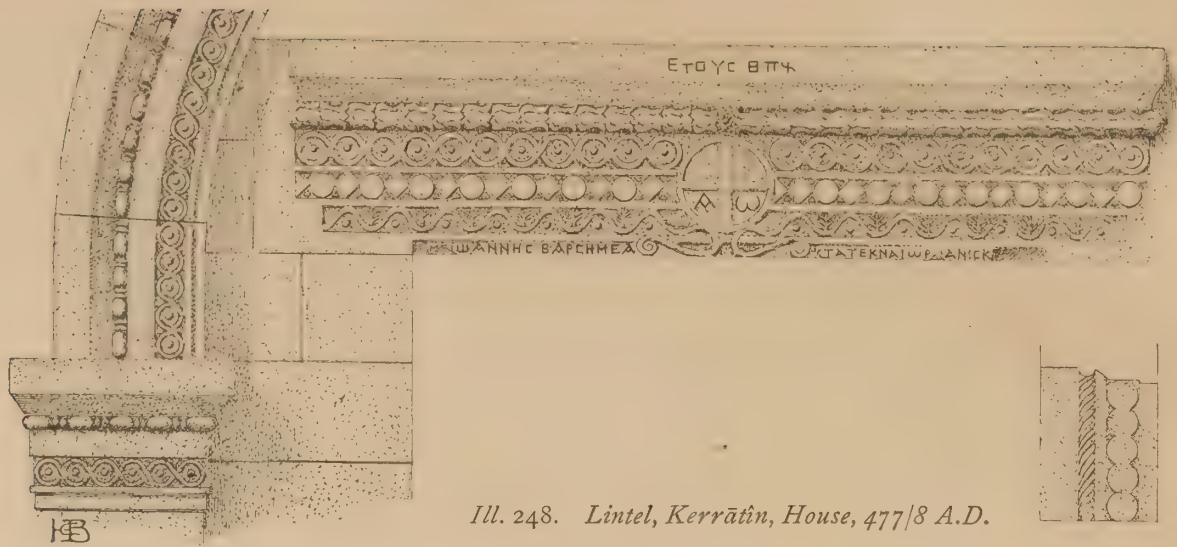
SOUTHERN SYRIA.

The churches of Southern Syria are generally speaking devoid of mouldings and of all carved decoration, except as it exists in a few simply executed crosses or discs. In the Cathedral church of Boḡrā the beautiful cornice, which is still partly preserved at the east end, was almost certainly taken from some building of the second century, and the mouldings of the apse arch were copied from it. In the church at Zor^{ah} we find a few mouldings in the west façade that appear to

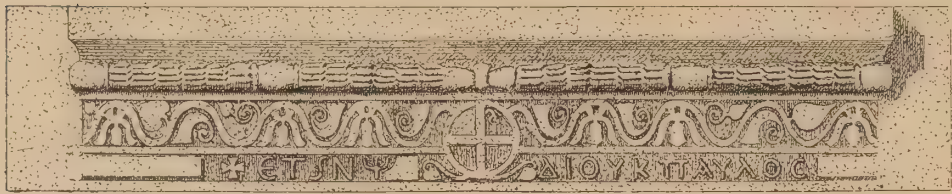


G

Ill. 247. Incised Moulding, Nawā, 598/9 A.D.



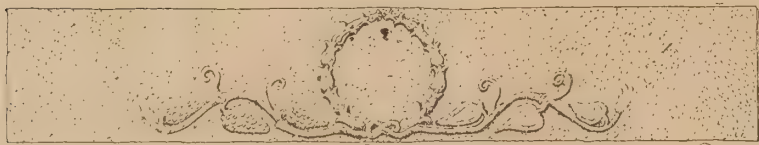
Ill. 248. Lintel, Kerrātīn, House, 477/8 A.D.



Ill. 249. Lintel, Kerrātīn, House, 444 A.D.



Ill. 250. Lintel with Grapevine, il-Anderin, Church No. 9.



Ill. 251. Lintel il-Ubër, Monastery.

be older than the date of the church. At ʿAnz and in two or three other places there are churches that have portals flanked by pilasters with very simple mouldings and provided with hood mouldings, or even moulded lintels. These may be of Christian workmanship, but the churches appear to be very ancient and it is not impossible that in them was carried out the scheme of the late Pagan portal decoration. Beyond these few exceptions, Christian ornament in the Ḥaurân

was very limited, being confined to the simplest kind of lintel decoration, the plainest form of the pier-cap, and the occasional use of a wreath in relief upon the soffit of an arch. Lintels have seldom more than a single cross in flat relief within a disc carved below the surface of the lintel. At il-Umtaʿiyeh,³⁹⁶ however, and at il-Ubêr (*Ill.* 251) the disc is relieved by a vine pattern that curves out on either side.

2. COLUMNS AND PIERS.

UNDER this heading may be included, first the columns of nave arcades, of narthexes and porches and the colonnettes that appear in some clearstoreys and in coupled windows; second, all free standing piers for the support of architraves or arches; and third, the angle piers which flank the apse and carry the chancel arch. Each of these is naturally to be divided into the usual parts, a base, die and cap, though the base is frequently omitted in both free standing piers and the piers of apses, and the cap of these piers is often no more than a group of mouldings, in which case it has already been classified with mouldings of piers and responds. On the other hand, the piers or responds at the end of the arcades now and again take the form of half columns, which would bring them under the present category.

NORTHERN SYRIA.

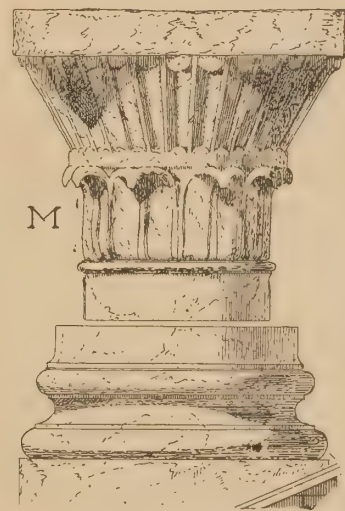
The column in the churches of Northern Syria was most commonly employed in the arcades of the nave, though smaller columns were frequently used in the narthex and, in rare instances, were applied in Classic fashion, in one or two orders, to the exterior surface of the apse wall, as at ʿĀlʿat Simʿân and ʿĀlb Lauzeh. At Dêr Sêtâ a colonnade carried on brackets was applied to the straight east wall of the church. In some of the earliest dated churches debased forms of all three Classic orders appear in alternation in one arcade. The columns in such an arcade are always of equal height, the bases and shafts are of the same dimensions in all the columns, and the capitals, though of different orders, are so treated as to bring them to the same

level. In a few churches in the North, which appear to be very early, a simple Doric and Ionic order is preserved throughout; and in a group of equally early churches in the Djebel Riḥa, in the southern part of the northern mountains, the Corinthian order is used with uniformity, except in small details.

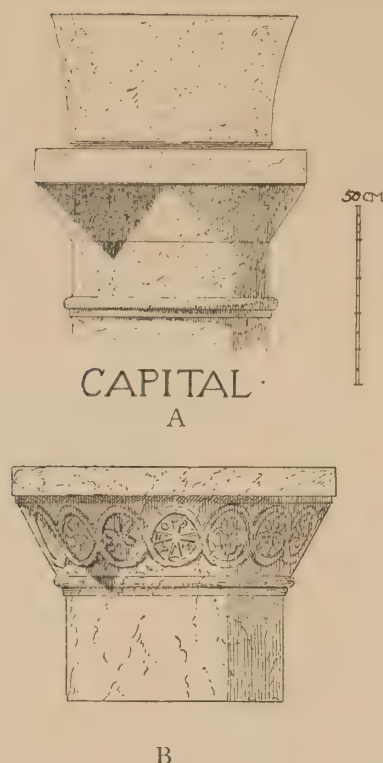
The bases of columns are invariably elevated upon a plinth block, 30 to 60 cm. high; they vary in form from a somewhat flat Attic base, 20 to 30 cm. high, to the profiles which suggest Gothic art (*Ill.* 252). The foot of the shaft is usually slightly flaring and has a narrow fillet at the bottom. Examples are not wanting in which a shaft, thus moulded, is set directly upon the plinth block; but this is not common. The shaft itself is usually monolithic, varying from 4 to 6 diameters high, and invariably has both diminution and entasis. It is usually given a cincture at the top with a suitable apophyge in addition to its apophyge and fillet at the bottom (*Ill.* 253). Occasionally the astragal appears from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a diameter below the capital, leaving a necking which was used to bring capitals



Ill. 252. Base of Column.



Ill. 253. Column. Brâd, Cathedral.

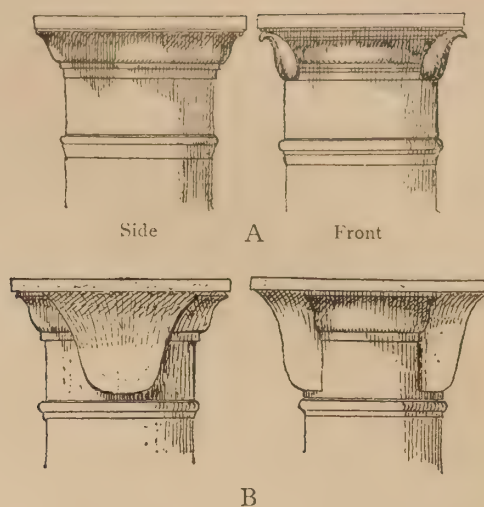


Ill. 254. Doric Capitals: A, Burdj Hêdar, West Church; B, Bā'ûdeh, 392 A.D.

of different orders to a common height. The only ornament ever given to the shaft, exclusive of its mouldings, is a diminutive arcuation below the astragal. A simple fluted shaft with sharp arrises is found in rare instances, as at the east end of the south arcade of the East Church at Bākirhā, and shafts, having twisted flutings with blunt arrises, were used to carry the apse arch at Baṣūfān and in the porch of the church at Bettir.

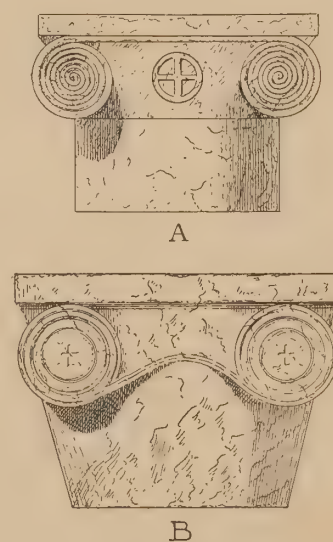
An endless variety of treatment is seen in the capitals of columns, both in the nave arcades and in narthexes and porches of the churches of Northern Syria. The Doric and Tuscan forms appear in some examples quite pure in style, while in others they are completely transformed. The Ionic capital is invariably debased and offers less variety; but the Corinthian displays unnumbered forms, some of them copied quite exactly from Classic models, others showing a strong Byzantine influence. The majority bear no resemblance to Classic Corinthian beyond the general outline and proportions. It is important to note that the dossier, or super capital, of Byzantine architecture nowhere appears, and that the imposts of arches are never wider than the diameter of the shaft.

Capitals may be classed as Doric which have an ovolo or straight echinus. Both forms are often ornamented with discs or with interlacing fillets (*Ill. 254*) or sometimes with egg-and-dart. I have designated as

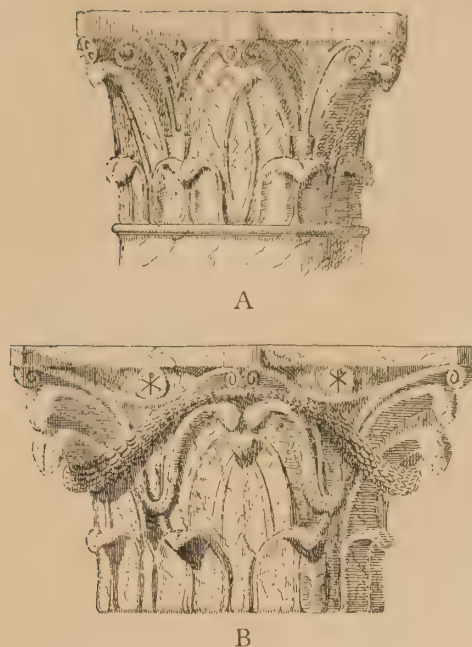


Ill. 255. Tuscan Capitals.

Tuscan the capitals with a filleted cyma-recta or a cavetto and ovolo in the echinus (*Ill. 255-A*). The Tuscan capitals, with brackets on either side, so common in the domestic architecture of Syria, occurs in a single church, at Btirsā, where architraves are employed (*Ill. 255-B*). Doric capitals with brackets of this kind are found on two columns in the South Church at Ruwêhā where the use of arches in the arcade renders the brackets quite useless, unless they supported some wooden structure underneath these arches. The Ionic capital in its debased form invariably lacks an echinus; but instead has a tall neck or bell above the astragal, where the capital is joined to the shaft, which makes its height equal to that of the Corinthian (*Ill. 256*). In the Doric and Tuscan also, when they are used in the same colonnade with other orders, a long necking is often added below the echinus, and its juncture with the shaft is marked by an astragal (*Ill. 254-A*).



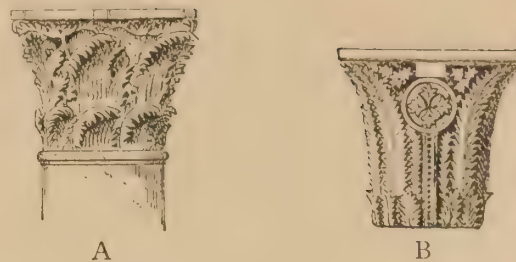
Ill. 256. Ionic Capitals: A, Kefr Nabō; B, Bā'ûdeh, 392 A.D.



Ill. 257. Corinthian Capitals:

A, *Dar Ẹitā*, Church of St. Paul and Moses, 418 A.D.
B, *Ẹaṣr il-Benāt*, Convent.

The varieties of Corinthian capitals are so numerous that it is impossible to illustrate them all. I give four of the most usual forms. The commonest type has the general proportions and parts of a regular Classic capital; but the details are left uncarved. The leaves have flat surfaces and straight edges; the volutes are often only indicated by incised lines (Ill. 257-A) or are omitted entirely. I have described this capital as the "uncut Corinthian" because it has the appearance of a capital of the Corinthian order blocked out, but with the finer details of carving left undone for lack of time or skill. The more one sees of the pre-Roman architecture of Syria, the more he is led to believe that this form of leaf, which the French call *feuille d'eau*, was not an unskilled attempt to imitate the acanthus leaf of the Corinthian capitals, but a representation of another kind of foliage, probably one of the arums. Leaves of this form were used at 'Arāḵ-il-Emīr early in the second century B.C. A distinctive variant of these "uncut Corinthian" capitals has laurel leaf garlands hung beneath the volutes at the corners. This "garlanded" capital is peculiar to Northern Syria being found at Ẹaṣr il-Benāt (Ill. 257-B), Ksēdjbeh, dated 414 A.D., the basilica at Midjleyyā,³⁹⁷ and a house at Serdjillā.³⁹⁸ It is also found in the Mary church³⁹⁹ and church of Mar Cosma⁴⁰⁰ at Amida, where in both cases the capitals differ from the Syrian



Ill. 258. Corinthian Capitals.

examples only to the extent of having their leaves modelled and cut to the acanthus form.

The "wind-blown" Corinthian capital, in which the leaves are twisted into a whorl about the bell (Ill. 258-A), is often found in the more richly ornamented churches of Northern Syria, even in the fifth century, although the type belongs essentially to the sixth century. This eccentric and animated form of capital, which is frequently found outside of Syria in Byzantine churches⁴⁰¹ but may have originated there, occurs in the church of Saint Phocas at Bāṣūfān in 491/2 A.D., in the North Church at Dēḥes, the Church of the Trinity at Dār Ẹitā, at Ẹal'at Sim'ān, Dēr Sambil, and at Aleppo (Ill. 183). The influence of Byzantine art is perhaps shown in the bell-shaped capitals surrounded with one row of long narrow leaves and a lower row of short ones which have the edges of these leaves cut in sharp saw-edge teeth, the points of which join to form vertical lines of deep triangles, like the "thorny acanthus" of colouristic carving (Ill. 258-B). The basket capital of Byzantine form, however, does not appear in Syria and the dossèret, or impost cap, is never used. There are, on the other hand, concave types, overwrought with lace-like patterns of foliage (Ill. 129, 132), which have their designs executed in small triangular incisions as is common in the capitals of Byzantine churches. In the East Church at Baḵirḥā we find both plastic and colouristic capitals in a single arcade (Ill. 259) which shows a curious mingling of the modelling technique of Classic art and the drill technique of so-called Byzantine origin.

Capitals of two unusual designs were found in churches dating from the early part of the fifth century. They have a square abacus above an inverted, truncated cone, the sides of which are ornamented (Ill. 47), the one with vertical or twisted grooves like the flutings of a column, and the other with a beaded basket work; both were probably intended to represent baskets and to this extent are related to the basket capitals of Byzantine art. Below one of these capitals

³⁹⁷ A. II, Fig. 35.

³⁹⁹ Strzygowski, *Amida*, p. 197, Pl. XXII, 1.

⁴⁰¹ Wilken von Alten, *Geschichte des altchristlichen Kapitells*, p. 9 f.

³⁹⁸ de Vogüé, op cit., Pl. 31.

⁴⁰⁰ Strzygowski, op. cit., Abb. 115.



Ill. 259. *Corinthian Capital, Bākirhā, East Church, 546 A.D.*

was a necking adorned with acanthus leaves (Ill. 253). This curious capital from the cathedral at Brâd suggests a composite idea. A more definite composite capital appears on the west porch of the East Church at Kalôtā, dating from 492 A. D., where a Doric echinus, carved with egg-and-tongue, is separated from a row of acanthus leaves by a long straight neck (Ill. 260).

The colonnettes which appear in the clearstoreys of a number of churches, or between coupled windows, are often made particularly ornamental. The brackets on which they rest are richly moulded and adorned with discs or other designs (Ill. 261). The shafts are in many cases fluted, though the fluting of columns was unusual in Syria, and the flutings are occasionally filled to half their height with delicate leaves. The capitals are of various forms, some of which are of

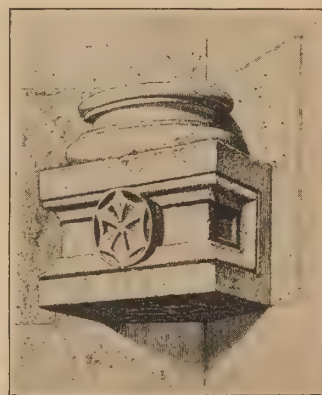
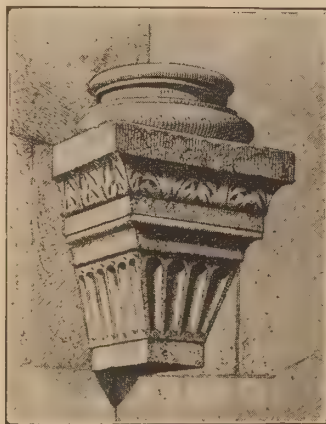
conventional types while others are of rounded forms, carved with basket patterns. The corbels above them are enriched with mouldings and symbolic discs.

The free-standing piers have bases of the usual profiles for base mouldings; their caps are generally conventionally treated in the Corinthian manner with a taller and shorter row of leaves, either of the free, flowing type with carving of acanthus design, or of the stiff, uncarved variety often seen in the capitals of columns. It is interesting to notice that the caps of the angle piers of the apse retain a Classic form longer than any other feature of the interior ornament. The pure type of Corinthian pilaster cap, with a cross in the middle of its abacus,⁴⁰² appears in churches where all the other details have become thoroughly Orientalized. It is true that in the earliest dated churches in Northern Syria, at Fāfirtīn for example, the apse pier has a cap of Doric profile in which the echinus is carved with a late type of egg-and-dart (Ill. 32); but most of the churches of the period have the other kind of cap with carefully wrought acanthus leaves. In some of the later churches these leaves are twisted like the wind-blown capitals (Ill. 262), and we also find the pier-cap with its leaves blocked out but uncarved. In churches where half columns are used in place of responds at the ends of nave arcades, as in Midjleyyā, il-Bārah, Khirbit Hāss, etc., the half column and the apse pier adjoining it on either side of the chancel arch are given a sort of compound capital of Corinthian design, the ornament of the half capital being carried without break around the pier.

The mouldings of the archivolt of the chancel arch are generally broken at their springing and carried horizontally above the cap of the apse pier (Ill. 228). On the church of Saint Phocas at Bāṣūfān, which is dated 491/2, the chancel arch is not brought down upon piers, but is carried by a Corinthian column on



Ill. 260. *Composite Capital, Kalôtā, 492 A.D.*



Ill. 261. *Brackets, Kal'at Sim'ân, (after de Vogüé).*

⁴⁰² Church at il-Bārah, de Vogüé, op. cit., Pl. 62. Butler, *A. II*, p. 98.



PIER CAP

Ill. 262. Dār Kītā, Church of the Trinity.



Ill. 264. Arcade, Midjleyyā, Church.



Ill. 265. Column.



B

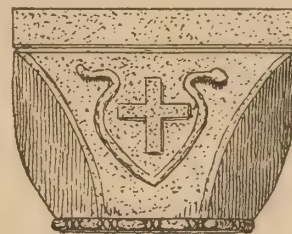


C

Ill. 266. Capitals, Nawā, Church, 598 A.D.



Ill. 263. Pier-cap and column of apse, Bāṣūfān, Church of St. Phocas.



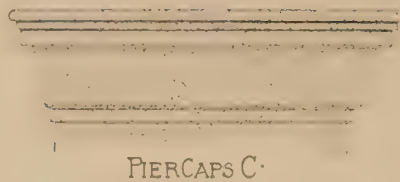
Ill. 267. Capital, Mu'allak South Church.

either side. These columns have spiral flutings and wind-blown capitals (*Ill. 263*). The impost moulding of the half dome of the apse usually terminates against the pier-cap; yet there are examples in which this moulding appears as an architrave above the pier-cap and the archivolt either terminates upon it or is returned above it as a second member of an entablature, which is a feature taken over from such Classic models at the Temple of Zeus at Ḳanawāt.

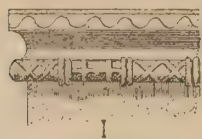
NORTHEASTERN SYRIA

The column is comparatively rare in the churches of Northeastern Syria, for the use of the pier was predominant in nave arcades of both wide and narrow arches. In a small number of naves where columns appear, and in the porches where they were more commonly found, scarcely a suggestion of the Classic orders is to be seen, except that the columns were composed of a base, a shaft and a capital. The capitals are either flat or campaniform in general outline. In the long basilica at Zebed, which is probably one of

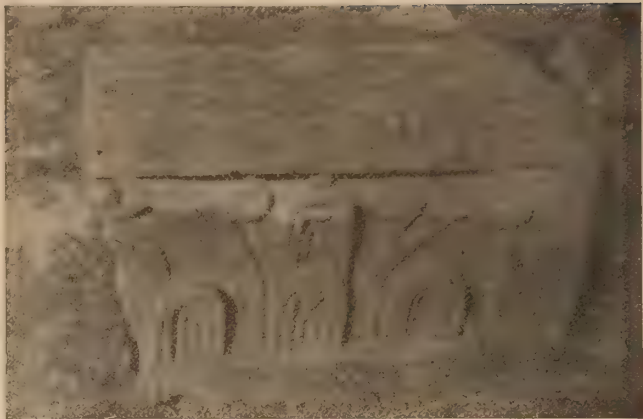
the earliest churches in the region, there is a row of bases set upon high plinth blocks. The profile of the base is almost a reproduction of that of the bases in the basilica at Midjleyyā in the Djebel Riḥā (*Ill. 264*). Shafts, wherever they are found, have no astragal, but have considerable diminution and entasis. Moulded forms of capitals, like the Nabataean capitals of the Ḥaurān, are found in a number of places, notably in the narthex of the great church at Kerrātīn (*Ill. 169*). Several non-descript capitals of moulded form were found among the ruins of Umm Wilāt; while there is no evidence that they belonged to a church, several of the shafts have little colonettes, or "candlesticks", carved upon them in high relief (*Ill. 265*). A capital which may perhaps be said to trace its origin to the Ionic order (*Ill. 266-C*) was found beside the East Church at Nawā, dated 590 A.D. Near by was also found a bell-shaped capital (*Ill. 266-B*) with trefoil ornaments in low relief. Another form of tall capital is to be seen in the nave arcades of the South Church of Mu'allak (*Ill. 267*). It consists of a square abacus



Ill. 268. *Fa'lûl, Church of the Archangels, 526/7 A.D.*



Ill. 269. *Pier-cap, Nawā, Church.*



Ill. 270. *Pier-cap Kaşr Zebed.*

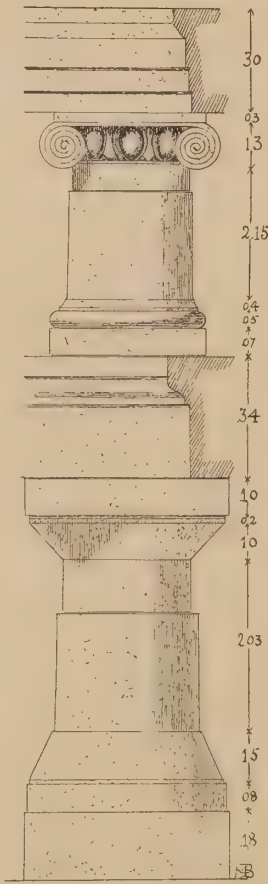
set upon a cubical block with the edges champfered down to a circle. Many other forms of capitals are found in the domestic architecture of this region; but these are the only forms that I have seen in the churches.

The piers that usually fulfilled the office of columns in these churches seldom have base mouldings, and when bases are used their profile is a simple bevelled face. The caps too in a great majority of the churches have plain, splayed mouldings, usually consisting of a vertical face and a bevel; yet in a small number of churches, like the church of the Holy Apostles at I'djâz, which dated 429/30 A.D., the piers have caps of some richness of detail. Some of them have a simple, bevelled face above three recessed fascias, the uppermost of which is carved with a vine pattern (Ill. 39); others have a filleted cyma-recta in place of the bevel. The piers of the narthex of the Church of the Archangels at Fa'lûl have a fine cap of the profile shown in (Ill. 268). A small arch-pier in the East Church at Nawā has not only a varied profile, but also some carving (Ill. 269). Most of the apse piers of Northeastern Syria are of the plainest right-lined type; in fact all the more delicate columnar details that serve to enrich the churches of the limestone hills of the North are wanting in this land of hard black basalt. There is, however, a pier cap at Kaşr Zebed which shows a modest attempt at foliate carving (Ill. 270).

SOUTHERN SYRIA.

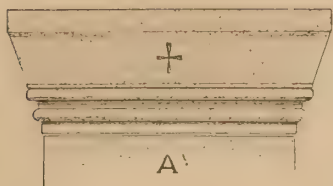
Columns are rare in the churches of the Djebel Haurân, where the transverse system of arches prevailed; but in the plain southwest of the mountains, where the longitudinal system of arches was also in vogue, but where the material is still basalt, columns are found in two at least of the debased Classic orders, namely, the Doric and Ionic. The Doric column was by far

the most popular in this region, being found in the nave arcades of two churches at Umm idj-Djimâl, in a church at Umm is-Surab and in a number of narthexes. This form of column as it is used in the churches of Southern Syria, together with one of Ionic style, may be seen in the superimposed orders of the nave of the church of Saint Sergios and Bacchos at Umm is-Surab, dated 489 and one of the rare Syrian churches with a longitudinal system in two storeys (Ill. 271). Pier-caps



· ORDERS ·

Ill. 271. *Umm is-Surab, Church of Ss. Sergios and Bacchos, 498 A.D.*



Ill. 272. Pier-cap, Şabḥah, Double Church.

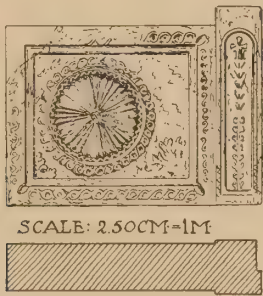
in Southern Syria are of right-lined profile in almost every case that has come to my attention; but the severity of this type is occasionally relieved by a set of thin mouldings below the bevelled face, as in the Double Church at Şabḥah (Ill. 272). The exceptions

to this form, that I know, are the pier of the West Church at Umm idj-Djimâl where the cap is composed of a cavetto below an ovolo and a fascia (Ill. 114-A), and the rather delicately moulded cap of Church N^o. 1 at Boşrâ (Ill. 117). Apse piers follow the forms of the piers of the nave arcades. The bevelled face of one of the pier-caps of the "Cathedral" at Umm idj-Djimâl is ornamented with an incised cross and the letters of the date 557. In a rare example, at id-Dêr, which is south of Boşrâ, the apse arch springs from engaged columns with good Corinthian capitals which were probably taken from some Pagan ruin.

3. CHANCELS AND PARAPETS

NORTHERN SYRIA

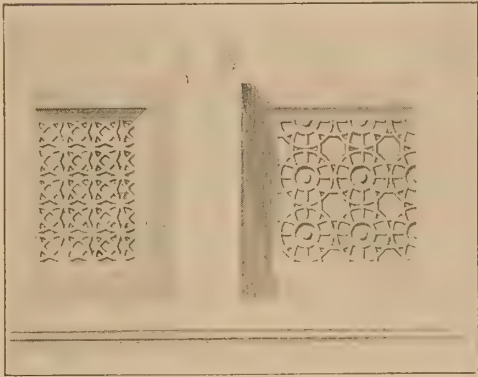
THE ornament of the chancel rail in Northern Syria consists of the caps, the panels of the posts and the surface carving of the slabs of the parapet. The post caps in the churches of Northern Syria are often hemispherical and adjusted to the square tops of the posts by diminutive angle antefixes. In many examples the tops of the posts are flat and have holes in them, which indicate that other fineal ornaments, perhaps of metal, were commonly used; the face of the panel is sometimes adorned with a conventional foliate pattern, usually a palm branch executed in the saw-tooth ornament. The slabs of the rail are usually about 90 cm. high, a meter long and 20 to 30 cm. thick, and they are often of one piece with a post. The ornament, on all the slabs that I have seen, was confined to one face, though in rare exceptions the slabs were pierced through in simple geometric designs. The designs wrought upon the ornamented face vary from a single central motive, such as a disc encircled with interlaces (Ill. 273) or vines, to a multiplication of some simple pattern, such as a basket-work of various designs, scales etc., or more elaborate diaper patterns applied to the whole surface (Ill. 274).



PANEL OF CHANCEL.

Ill. 273. Surḳanyā, Chapel.
Early Churches in Syria.

The parapet above the columned porch of the Church of Saint Mary at Shêkh Slēmân is one of the most perfectly preserved of these monumental barriers (Ill. 275), and has the advantage of being entirely visible, while many of the chancel rails are hidden by the débris of fallen half domes which originally stood above them. The end posts of this parapet are of extra width to cover the returned walls below them; the side of each post next to the slabs of the parapet is treated in relief like the face of an ordinary intermediate post; and the outer face is ornamented by incised carving with a tall Latin cross within an arched panel. The intermediate posts have tall moulded panels, but one it divided into four square panels. The solid vertical slabs between the posts are oblong and are panelled in a variety of ways. The middle one shows three low, broad arches, colonnettes which enclose symbolical discs. Those adjoining the middle are divided into two rectangular moulded panels which are "kneel" in at the lower, outer angles and also enclose discs or square plaques of intricate pattern. The outer slabs are also divided into two panels, but they have rounded tops, and, like the others, are "kneel" in at the lower courses. They also frame



Ill. 274. Chancel, Der Sambil, Tomb (after de Vogüé).



Ill. 275. Parapet, Shêkh Slēmân, Church of St. Mary.

ornamental and symbolical discs. The design is thus symmetrical and well balanced with reference to the axis.

NORTHEASTERN SYRIA

A great variety of posts was found in this region for the reason that they made popular tombstones for the Mohammedans of the Middle Ages. The slabs, for the most part, have disappeared. Although there is a single slab at I'djaiyiz (*Ill. 287*) which was probably part of the chancel rail, the only certain slabs, of which I have any record, are the slabs of the choir-rail of the great basilica at Zebed, which are still in place (*Ill. 217*). The posts of this rail have caps composed of stepped mouldings which are very different from the usual form of cap in Northern Syria. The panels of the posts are often richly carved as in a set of scattered chancel posts at 'Ôdjeh (*Ill. 276*) and in the church of the Holy Apostles at 'Idjâz, where one post is still in situ at the south side of the chancel arch. Both of these examples have inscriptions upon them, and that of the latter gives the date of the chancel as 429/30 A.D. One of the most interesting of all the chancel posts found in this region is the one at Kûnbus (*Ill. 285*) which is described in the chapter on sculpture.

The only ornamented slabs which were definitely

part of a parapet, in this region, are those which are still in place in the choir rail of the basilica at Zebed. There are three slabs in place on the north side of the central axis of the basilica, one on the south, all facing east, and one on the return, on the south side, facing south. There is probably only one missing on the south side of the axis; for the enclosure was not centred on the main axis of the church. The slabs are nearly square, some being a little wider than others. Each slab has a counter-sunk panel framed in a moulding, the field within the frame being variously ornamented, as may be seen in *Ill. 217*. The carving is all in flat relief, not colouristic. The designs are not in the least like the designs of the chancels and parapets of Northern Syria, and are rather more geometrical. The fourth slab on the east face of the parapet, not shown in the drawing, has a border of chevrons upon its outer frame. The panel contains an oblique square inscribed about a circle divided horizontally. In the upper half of the circle is a cross, in the lower a diamond. The intersecting knotted ropes of the panel which faces south are shown in a photograph (*Ill. 277*). The inscriptions in Greek and in Syriac written on the frame of all these panels are believed to date from the fourth century.



Ill. 276. Chancel Post, ʿŌdjeh.



Ill. 277. Panel of Chancel, Zebed, Basilica.



Ill. 278. Chancel Post, Umm idj-Djimâl.

SOUTHERN SYRIA

Few chancel rails have been found in the South, probably because the churches there are more ruined and the fallen half domes of the apses have buried them. In the church of Saint George at Zorʿah, which is dated 515 A.D., the posts of a chancel rail of marble

are still to be seen. They are not in their original positions, having been thrown down and unevenly set up again. These have a pointed sugar-loaf top, without acroteria, and panelled sides. Some of the short posts found at Umm idj-Djimâl (Ill. 278) may have served in this capacity.

4. TRACERY

THE subject of window tracery in the churches of Central Syria has never yet been touched upon except in so far as the window plates, with small apertures for light, found by M. de Vogüé in the Ḥaurân, may be considered under this subject. The window tracery of Northern Syria is of a very different type from the window placques of the Ḥaurân; it is all, of course, of the kind that would be called plate tracery, no independent bars of stone being employed, but it is of a much finer type, and more of the nature of stone grille-work than any of the basalt plates which are so common in the Ḥaurân. Owing to delicacy of workmanship, and fineness of detail, there are no well preserved examples of tracery in the churches of Northern Syria, and the fragments of it that have been found would not be recognized as tracery if

it had not been for the discovery of a few of these in situ.

In two windows of the south wall of the church at Dêr Sêtâ, we found the fragments which give the key to the placing of other fragments scattered among other ruins. These two windows both contain the outer rims of large plates of open grille work (Ill. 128). The rims are delicately moulded, and show the stumps of slender bars of stone which formed a pattern of some kind, the interstices of which were open, and perhaps glazed. The remains show that the bars of the grille-work were not over four centimetres in thickness and suggest that they followed graceful curves.

Suggestions as to the patterns used in tracery in Northern Syria are given in the thin, but solid, plates of pattern carving that fill the semicircular tops of many rectangular windows with carved mouldings



Ill. 279. Grille of Window Tympanum
(after de Vogüé).



Ill. 281. Plate Tracery, Dêr Termânîn.



Ill. 282. Plate Tracery, Umm il-Kuttên.

above them. A number of these solid grilles are shown in Plate 50 of *La Syrie Centrale*, one of which is reproduced herewith (Ill. 279). The plate of fine pattern carving is of one piece with the lintel stone and its mouldings. The portion of the lintel below the semi-circle of mouldings was simply cut back to a thin plate and then ornamented with surface carving. These plates were in some cases, perhaps in many, pierced through with carving, providing a grille of open work above the rectangular window, a number of arcuated lintels show stumps of tracery in the soffit of the arch; but all of them are hopelessly broken.

Such imitation grilles were perhaps copied from true grilles of wood or metal work, and the imitation may have led directly to the production of plate tracery by making the carving a little deeper and piercing the plate of stone. It is evident that plate tracery was applied not only to the ordinary windows of churches, but also to the open relieving arches above portals. In the small arches above the lintels of the doorways in the chapel of Ẓaṣr il-Mudakhkhin there are very evident signs that tracery has been broken away. The arches in this case are arcuated lintels, and the face of the stone is carved with deep lines which represent the points of voussoirs. Some

of these lintels are cut to represent a mortice joint (Ill. 280). Another form of tracery was used in the gable ends of churches. Part of a gable wall in the ruins of the church at Bettir shows fragments of two wheel windows in which the tracery was not an inserted plate but was cut as part of the stone of the gable. M. de Vogüé's drawing of the church of Termânin, as it was in his day, plainly shows a circular window in the gable, filled with a cross in plate tracery (Ill. 281).

The window plates of Southern Syria are beautifully illustrated in M. de Vogüé's great work.⁴⁰³ It is not necessary to show more than one new example (Ill. 282). These plates are often richly carved on the outer face, but the pattern carving does not pierce the plate throughout its surface. Only a few openings, usually small round holes, are actually bored through for the admission of light and air. It is almost certain that they were not glazed.



LINTELATA

Ill. 280. Arched Lintel, Ẓaṣr il-Mudakhkhin.

5. SCULPTURE

THE carving of animal forms, in distinction from vegetable and geometrical patterns, in the ecclesiastical architecture of Syria, may be treated as a topic by itself, because the existing examples are so rare that they are easily lost sight of in the mass of decorative carving. Representations of the human figure are extremely rare, appearing in only three examples, which, by accident, appear to have escaped the violence of the iconoclastic Christians in early days, and of Mohammedan image-haters in later times. The figures of small animals and birds, especially the dove and the peacock, which had definite symbolical significance, appear in a number of monuments; but even these representations of living creatures seem to have been objectionable to the more fanatical sects of Christians and Moslems, and many of them have been wholly destroyed or so nearly effaced as to be hardly recognizable. It goes without saying that all figure sculpture in the round has perished utterly, if there was any.

In Northern Syria, the remains of sculpture showing animal forms are very rare. Evidence of the former existence of figure-sculpture is very strong in one lone example — the beautiful portal of the so-called baptistery of the East Church at Bābīškā (*Ill.* 240). Above the richly carved mouldings of the lintel, there is an arcade of nine arches in relief.⁴⁰⁴ These arches were carried upon colonnettes which were carved just free from the background, and which stood on alternate cusps of the moulding below. The arch in the middle is a little higher than the others. The little arches were moulded, and their spandrils were carved with foliate design. The whole composition resembles that of a large and important type of sarcophagi. The colonnettes have been broken away, and it is perfectly plain that figures have been intentionally hacked out of the niches formed by the arches, two of which show outlines that cannot be mistaken for anything else than human figures. A simple lintel, in the same enclosure, which shows the same kind of rinceau as that in the middle band of the lintel under discussion, is dated in the year 480. The Plates of *La Syrie Centrale*⁴⁰⁵ record two examples of animal figures, the *Agnus Dei* relief which is not from a church, but from a house in Dêr Sambil, and four peacocks upon a large lintel in Southern Dâna, which probably came from a church. These figures were executed in flat relief without sur-

face modelling upon a wide splay-face above a carved ovolo. Two of the birds face an urn in the middle of the lintel, in perfectly Oriental bi-symmetry, the other two occupy the ends of the lintel. The field is covered with an all-over pattern of rather naturalistic grapevine. In other places there are lintels upon which the mutilated figures of peacocks can still be traced. In several foliate pier-caps, like those which separated the chancel arch of the East Church at Bākīrḥā, it is easy to see that carving has been broken away intentionally; but one cannot say whether the figures at the angles of these caps were human heads or rams' heads, like those at Ẓaṣr Ibn Wardân, eagles or some other forms from the natural world.

In Northeastern Syria there is slightly more evidence for sculpture of both human and animal figures. These are, of course, in the flat relief demanded by the basalt in which they are carved. The earliest example here, perhaps the earliest of its kind in the world, is the Madonna and Child⁴⁰⁶ on the lintel of a church in Khanāṣīr (*Ill.* 283). The surface is framed and divided into three panels by flat bands. The middle panel is square, and contains the upper half of the figure of the Virgin in a frontal position with the Child in a central frontal pose. The figures are in the flattest kind of relief. Both heads have the nimbus, but the features are hardly more than indicated. The longer panels on either side each frame an adoring angel as simply and as crudely represented as the central figures. A somewhat later representation of the same subject was found on the fallen lintel of the East Church at Zebed.⁴⁰⁷ Here the Virgin enthroned, with the Infant to the right of the centre, is enclosed in a circular, beaded frame, perhaps an early form of mandorla (*Ill.* 284). The lintel is divided horizontally by a string of beads, above which, on either side of the central frame is an angel flatly treated, but less crudely than in the other example. In the corners above the angel figures are small rosettes, like stars. The part of the lintel below the angels is decorated with a band of flat, conventional grapevine between two plain bands. Another piece of figure sculpture in Northeastern Syria was found upon a chancel post at Ẓunbus. Here the figure which stands upon the top of a pillar, one would like to call Saint Simeon in spite of the cruciform nimbus carved above his head. Like the others, this scene is represented in flattest

⁴⁰⁴ *P.* II B. *Ill.* 177.

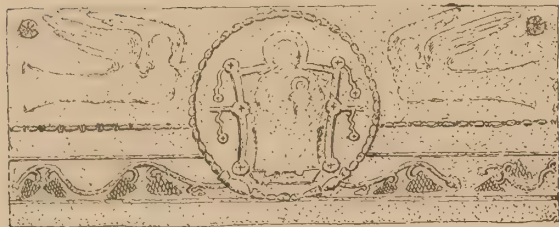
⁴⁰⁶ *A.* II, p. 308.

⁴⁰⁵ *S. C.* Pls. 45 and 48.

⁴⁰⁷ *A.* II, p. 308.



Ill. 283. Madonna and Child, Lintel at Khanâsir.



Ill. 284. Madonna and Child, Lintel, Zebed. East Church.



KVNBVS-
CHANCEL POST.

Ill. 285.



I'DJÂZ · LINTEL ·

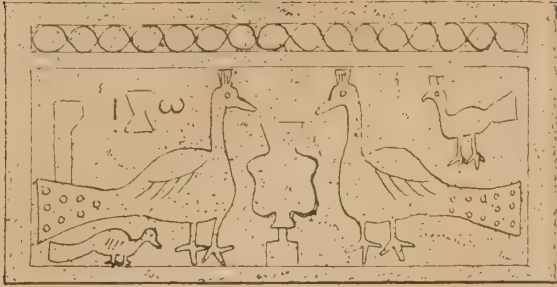
SCALE: 10CM:1M.

Ill. 286.

relief. The column is lower than the figure, and is of simple Doric form. The figure is almost geometrically treated (*Ill. 285*) and a large cross within a semicircle rises behind the head.

Few examples of the figures of beasts have survived in this basalt sculpture of Northeastern Syria; yet there is a very well preserved lintel at I'djâz, among the half hidden ruins of a church in the modern village, which abounds with lifelike representations of well known animals. The lintel

is richly decorated (*Ill. 286*) with bands of geometrical and highly conventionalized vegetable ornament, executed in narrow, flat fillets. In one band the fillets describe alternating squares and groups of three circles. Within the squares and at the ends of the scrolls in the band below are little animals, like the sheep, the dog, the goat and the stag and two or three kinds of birds, all very well drawn and executed in low relief. In one of the quadrants between the cross and its circumscribing circle in the middle of



Ill. 287. Carved Slab, I'djaiyiz.

the lintel is a dove, and above the circle are much poorer representations of birds which were probably intended for peacocks. A totally different kind of figure carving is seen on a slab in a small ruin not far away, called I'djaiyiz. In this example (*Ill. 287*) two large peacocks facing a vase, and two smaller birds in the field of the design are executed entirely in incised lines. The drawing here is very crude, resembling the work of a child. A very much more artistic treatment of this subject is to be seen in a



Ill. 288. Mosaic, Khirbit Hâss, Church.

number of house lintels in il-Anderîn, but only defaced examples appear in the lintels of church portals; but these were probably as well executed as the others.

6. MOSAIC

EVIDENCES of mosaic decoration, but only for pavements, are plentiful in the churches of all parts of Syria. There is no proof that this kind of decoration was employed upon walls, vaults or half domes, except in the church at Ẓaṣr ibn Wardân, which appears to have been built under foreign influence; and there the evidence is not conclusive. Patterns of very simple geometrical design have been found in mosaic pavements in the West Church at Umm idj-Djimâl in Southern Syria, in the church at Mir'âyeh in Northeastern Syria and in numerous churches in the North, notably at Ẓal'at Sim'ân, Dêr Sim'ân, Serdjillâ and Ruwêḥâ. It seems unwise to uncover mosaics in these distant places, where no measures can be taken to preserve them; and investigations have been undertaken only where the pavement was already partly exposed and consequently disintegrated. In the north aisle of the basilica at Medjleyya a pavement was found with a white ground upon which

were executed simple geometrical figures in black, blue, red and brown. Before the apse of the church at Khirbit Hâss a part of a mosaic pavement was discovered, consisting of an oblong panel within which were the figures of four peacocks, grouped in pairs, back to back, with their tails crossed, the two middle ones facing a vase (*Ill. 288*). The panel was framed in borders of interlaces and meanders. The design is executed in small cubes, and the technique is excellent. The drawing is far better than in most of the sculpture in which similar designs appear. The peacocks are outlined in dark red, their tails are picked out in green and yellow, the vine pattern about them is in green. The interlaces are striped in shaded colours, and the meanders are drawn and shaded so as to give the effect of perspective. This one example indicates that the mosaic pavements of these Syrian churches were of an unusually high order from an artistic point of view.

CHAPTER X.

INFORMATION DERIVED FROM THE INSCRIPTIONS.

THE ruined towns of Syria abound in inscriptions which were placed by the ancient inhabitants upon every kind of structure. Many of these are to be seen today in their original places, others lying amid heaps of fallen building materials, and a few, especially in the South, have been moved from the ruins and now occupy places of prominence in modern structures, as objects of half-understood and mysterious value, especially in the villages of the Druses. A large collection of several hundred Syrian inscriptions was made by Waddington in the early sixties, and the American and Princeton expeditions have added several hundred more. A considerable number of these inscriptions were set up in ecclesiastical buildings, many of them upon the portals of churches and baptisteries which are still in situ. Others, which have been carried away from their original places, are still recognizable as church inscriptions; others, however, if they were not found upon church buildings, could not be differentiated from inscriptions upon houses and tombs. We may confine our discussion here to the ecclesiastical inscriptions, the majority of which are in Greek, although a considerable number in the North and Northeast are in Syriac. A single Christian Arabic inscription was found in a church at Umm idj-Djimâl. Bilingual inscriptions in Greek are not unknown; a bilingual in Greek and Arabic was found at Ḥarrân in the Ledjâ; and a trilingual in Greek, Syriac and Arabic was found at Zebed, the famous *trilinguis Zebedeæ*.

There are various kinds of information to be derived from the church inscriptions. The most directly patent and practical information is in the form of dates. Occasionally the ancient name of a place is given, and very often the name of the saint in whose name a church was dedicated. Several of these inscriptions explain that the building was a memorial church or a martyrium or a baptistery, and there are several which give us information of the former existence of churches that are now no more, or are not to be recognized as such in their ruins. Very interesting dates are to be had from some of these documents which give us the names of the architects, the builders or the masons who were engaged in erecting them, and

the names of the men at whose expense certain churches were erected. Some of these inscriptions mention the names of emperors reigning at the time of the building of the church, others give the names of prelates of the time. A large number tell us the names of priests and deacons under whose direction the churches were constructed. A great many of these inscriptions are only scriptural quotations, or pious ejaculations, which, however interesting as indications of the religious state of mind of the writers, are distinctly disappointing to the historian; but, taken as a whole, these inscriptions are a priceless body of documents for the churches and monasteries of a great religion, for which every other kind of document has perished, excepting a few which touch upon the country in a very general way, like the works of Procopius which make only the briefest mention of a very small number of places, or the ecclesiastical biographies which hardly touch upon material things. These inscriptions must take the place of the cartularies of the monasteries and the archives of the churches, and, though scant in volume, they have the great advantage of not having been altered to suit the pleasure or convenience of some Mediæval or later prelate, abbot or priest, as so many of the records of European churches have been.

Dates:

Many of these inscriptions give nothing but the date; in others the date is added to a longer inscription. The dates in Greek inscriptions are given by Greek notation, in Greek letters, according to various eras, while the Syriac inscriptions usually spell out the date, e. g. *In the year five hundred and fifty and six, according to the era of Antioch.*⁴⁰⁸ There were several eras according to which dates are given. The era of Antioch begins in the year 49 A. D., and some of the Syrian inscriptions mention this era, though the Greek inscriptions of Northern Syria usually take it for granted. In certain localities of the North, as in the Djebel Riḥa and in most of Northeastern Syria, the old Seleukid era, beginning 312 B. C., was used. In the South, in addition to the Seleukid era, one or two local eras were employed in writing dates, as the era of Boṣrâ, called also the era of the province of Arabia,

⁴⁰⁸ A. IV, p. 15.

beginning 105 A.D., and the era of Shaḡḡā which probably began with 61 A.D.⁴⁰⁹ Fortunately these various eras are widely enough separated in time to cause little confusion; moreover, the style of the lettering and the architectural details connected with the inscriptions are usually helpful indices of the era, if other indications fail.

Places:

The names of places are more likely to be found in secular inscriptions; nevertheless there is an inscription among the monastic buildings at Ḳalʿat Simʿān which gives the name Τίλοκβαριν which possibly preserves the ancient name of a neighbouring ruin now called Tell ʿAḳibrīn. This, and other place-names in the inscriptions of Syria, show that the old Aramaic names still clung to the smaller towns even after Greek had become the usual written language. A church lintel in Bābiskā mentions the name of a tribe, Zoryn or Zaryl.

Designations of Buildings:

The obvious term for the church edifice, ἐκκλησία (*ecclesia*), occurs seldom in the inscriptions, perhaps because it was obvious. Such expressions as *This was built* or *It was built*, commonly used, avoid the use of a substantive. The word, however, is found in at least two inscriptions, neither of which is in place; one of them, from il-Kefr in the Ḥaurān,⁴¹⁰ says that the *ecclesia* was founded *Under Flavius Bonus, the most illustrious comes and dux*, and is dated in the year 392; the other from Sāleh⁴¹¹ and dated between the years 566 and 574, tells us that the church was erected at the expense of the town. There are no other material remains of either of these two churches. The word βασιλική (*basilica*) is found in two inscriptions, neither of which is in place; and it is impossible to discover if a church was referred to by this term. One of these inscriptions, at ʿOrmān,⁴¹² is dated in the year 330 A.D., which is a very early date for a church, and tells us that the *basilica* was *dedicated*, under certain officials, without any indication of Christian origin. The other example is very similar.⁴¹³ Another term, εὐκτήριον, an oratory or a "place of prayer", is certainly applied to a church edifice, as in the case of the central structure

at Faʿlūl,⁴¹⁴ in Northeastern Syria, dedicated in the name of the Archangels and dated 526—7 A.D. Another inscription, found at Sāleh,⁴¹⁵ used this word in referring to a church of Saint Elias and some other saint whose name is lost. It is dated 547 A.D. One can not say whether this word indicated some particular kind of chapel or church, or whether it was one of several words which might be applied to any place of worship, as we speak of a sanctuary, a house of prayer, and the like. The old Greek word for a Pagan temple, ναός, is apparently employed to designate a whole church, rather than the nave of a church as one might expect, for we have the *naos* of Saint Sergios mentioned upon the lintel of the portal of a "great church" seen by Waddington at Busr il-Ḥarīrī⁴¹⁶ on the edge of the Ledjā. The inscription is dated 517 A.D. The *naos* of Saint Elias is referred to in an inscription of 563 A.D. from Nedjrān,⁴¹⁷ and the *naos* of the Prophet Elias appears in a dated inscription of the year 512 at Zorʿah.⁴¹⁸ In both cases the church seems to have replaced a temple of the god Helios, which may explain why the term came to be continued in Christian times. This same word is also used with reference to the church of a monastery dedicated to Saint Sergios at Dêr il-Ḳāḏi⁴¹⁹ and to another church, of the Holy Martyr George, at Nāhiteh,⁴²⁰ dated 623 A.D. Not one of the five churches referred to in the above named inscriptions is now in existence, though three of them were seen by Waddington.⁴²¹ A very early Christian inscription at Shaḡḡā,⁴²² dated 323 or 368, speaks of the οἶκος (house) of *Holy Victorious Martyrs Georgios and the saints with him*. Another Pagan word, ἱερόν (*hieron*) is applied in a very early Christian inscription, dated 354, to a church, or chapel, of a monastery which was seen by Waddington at il-Hīt in the Ḥaurān.⁴²³ The building was dedicated to Saint Sergios. The lintel with the inscription is not in place. It is interesting to find that some of these words, taken over from Pagan usage and used by the Christians in the early days of church building, fell into disuse after a century or more had passed.

Memorial churches and chapels may sometimes have been designated by the synonymous terms, μνημα and μνημεῖον. The first is used to describe the earliest extant church in Syria, — the Julianos church at Umm

⁴⁰⁹ Cf. Prentice, *A.* III, p. 296.

⁴¹⁰ *P.* III, inscr. 670.

⁴¹¹ Wadd. 2261. Other examples of the use of this word were found at Krēm (*P.* III, 802), and at Abū Ḥaniyeh, dated 406—7 A.D. (*P.* III, 1003), and at Muʿallak, dated 606—7 A.D. (*A.* III, 332).

⁴¹² *P.* III, 701.

⁴¹³ Wadd. 2189.

⁴¹⁴ *P.* III, 1050.

⁴¹⁵ *P.* III, 728.

⁴¹⁶ Wadd. 2477.

⁴¹⁷ Wadd. 2431.

⁴¹⁸ Wadd. 2497.

⁴¹⁹ Wadd. 2412.

⁴²⁰ Wadd. 2412 m.

⁴²¹ At Boṣrā the word is used for the church of Saints Sergios, Bacchos and Leontios which was built in 512—13 A.D. (*P.* III, 557). and at Durʿamān it is perhaps used for a church (*P.* III, 1115).

⁴²² Wadd. 2158.

⁴²³ Wadd. 2124.

Early churches in Syria.

idj-Djimāl, dated 344 A.D.,⁴²⁴ but is not found in the inscriptions of later churches. The second term is very common in sepulchral inscriptions and perhaps occurs in the dedicatory inscription on the portal of the church of Saints Sergios and Bacchos at Umm is-Surab⁴²⁵ which is dated 489. A larger number of buildings are designated by the word *μαρτύριον* (*martyrion*). This term is applied to a large church at Zebed and to a little chapel at Kefr Nabō, in which case the writing is in Syriac. It may signify that the churches so named actually marked the sites of the graves of martyrs; but more probably that they contained relics of martyred saints. This was undoubtedly true of the great Martyrion of Saint Sergios at Zebed,⁴²⁶ dated 512, which is described on page 158. Fragments of inscriptions from two different lintels were found among the ruins at ʿŌdjeh,⁴²⁷ also in Northeastern Syria, which both conclude with the words, *completed this holy martyrion*. The two inscriptions may have come from different doors of the same church, or, perhaps, from different shrines in the same church; but it is possible that they may have belonged to different buildings. Among the church inscriptions of Southern Syria which use the word *martyrion* are the following: the famous bilingual in Greek and Arabic upon the portal of the church of Saint John at Harrân⁴²⁸ dated 568; an inscription upon the doorway of a little chapel at Diyâṭḥeh⁴²⁹ called the "martyrion of Saint Elias"; another of the "martyrion of Saint Theodore" at Shaḳḳā;⁴³⁰ a fourth on the lintel of a church at Umm iz-Zētûn;⁴³¹ and, finally, one at Shaḳrā.⁴³² All of these churches have been destroyed. Only one monastery, among all the ruined ones still in existence, is given its original Greek name, *μοναστήριον* in an inscription; this is the convent at Dêr in-Naṣrânî⁴³³ described on page 91, though the word occurs in inscriptions that are not in place, as in one example from Boṣṣrā.⁴³⁴ The term *baptisterion* does not occur in any of the inscriptions that are still in place in the four or five buildings which are certainly baptisteries; but the Syriac equivalent appears upon at least two lintels⁴³⁵ of extant buildings of this kind, the baptistery at Dêḥes and that at Khirbit il-Khaḳīb which is dated 532. It would seem that the obvious

words, like *ecclesia*, *monasterion* and *baptisterion* were often consciously omitted from the inscriptions of Syria.

Architectural Terms:

Parts of ecclesiastical buildings are also occasionally named in the inscriptions. The architect Kyrios was buried in the *ἀψίς* (*apsis*) of the church which he built at Ḳaṣr il-Benât.⁴³⁶ An inscription upon the lintel of a large church dedicated to Saint Sergios at Busr il-Ḥarirî,⁴³⁷ and bearing the date 517 A.D. uses this word in the plural, indicating that there was more than one apse, as we find at Dêr Simdj which is also in Southern Syria, and is described on page 119.

The Pagan form *κόγχη*⁴³⁸ (*concha*), which was applied to large niches for statues, was doubtless used also of church apses in Syria as it was in the Occident. M. Waddington, who copied so many of these inscriptions nearly sixty years ago, when many of the churches were in a far better state of preservation than they are now, was of the opinion that *ἱερωτεῖον* was the word used for the nave of a church, and *προσθήκη* for the porch in front or at the side. These words occur in at least one of the inscriptions found by him.⁴³⁹ *Πρόσοψις* is a newly discovered word, found upon a lintel, which is not in place, near the East Church at Bābiskā,⁴⁴⁰ and dated October 480 A.D. The lintel was set carelessly, one would judge, on jambs made for it in a place for which it was certainly not intended, that is, against the inside face of the main arch of entrance to the atrium on the south side of the church, and in such a manner that the ends of the lintel, which is beautifully carved, are hidden by the curve of the arch. The church within has two portals in its south wall, one of which is dated 401; both have fallen but all their parts are lying as they fell. The church has no west portal; yet there is evidence that the west front was, at least, partly rebuilt, for it contains an inverted inscription of the year 407. It seems probable that the lintel dated 480 was made for the reconstruction of this wall. It may have been set in the wall and afterwards removed, or it may have been made for an intended west portal which was abandoned in the execution of the final plan. In any event, the church came down through the centuries without any

⁴²⁴ P. III, 262. There is very slight and doubtful evidence for the existence in Syria at this time of memorial churches and chapels. In the case of the church of Julianos, the inscription is on a lintel which was found on the ground near a side portal of the church. Professor David Magie, who was an associate of Professor Butler on the expedition and published this inscription, is convinced that it refers to a tomb that Agathos built for his son Julianos. Not only the use of the word *μνήμα* but the pseudo-Homeric metrical form of the inscription and the reference in it to a near-by public cemetery, which was not found in the neighbourhood of the church, makes him feel that the inscription was not made for the church and that the lintel on which it appears was brought from some tomb and built into the church, perhaps during a late rebuilding of the structure (See page 19 note 15).

⁴²⁵ P. III, 51. Professor Magie tells me that the word *μ[νημεῖον]* restored in the Umm is-Surab inscription, might equally well be read *μ[αρτύριον]*.

⁴²⁶ A. III, 336a.

⁴²⁷ P. III, 961, 962.

⁴²⁸ Wadd. 2464.

⁴²⁹ Wadd. 2436.

⁴³⁰ Wadd. 2159.

⁴³¹ Wadd. 2548.

⁴³² Wadd. 2510.

⁴³³ P. III, 722.

⁴³⁴ P. III, 575.

⁴³⁵ A. IV, 8, 12.

⁴³⁶ A. III, 76.

⁴³⁷ Wadd. 2477.

⁴³⁸ Wadd. 2218. P. III, 654.

⁴³⁹ Wadd. 2158.

⁴⁴⁰ P. III, 1099.

west entrance. In the light of these probabilities it seems certain that *prosopsis* (properly *aspect* or *sight*) means façade, as it is used in this inscription. It may have been written for *prosapsis* (*opposite to the apse*). There is a distinctly Christian and religious, if not ecclesiastical, inscription, or pair of inscriptions, dated 488, upon two marble columns which now stand near each other in the Mosque of Omar at Boṣrā.⁴⁴¹ They originally stood side by side, for the inscription extends from one to the other. The Greek expression here is τὸ τρίκονχον σίγμα which may be translated the *semi-circle with three conchas*. Concha (*a shell*) is the word for niche used in Pagan inscriptions. It seems to me that the expression would apply perfectly to any apse with three niches in it, from the tri-lobed apsis of the temple at Ḳanawât, described on page 15 to the apsidal chapels in the angles of the Cathedral at Boṣrā, only a short distance from the inscriptions under discussion. These apsidal chapels are provided with three *conchas* each; but the two conchas, or niches, on either side of the middle one, have doorways in them under the little semi-domes which are the real shell part of the niches. Columns originally stood in front of these chapels, as may be seen in the plan (III. 124), and the columns with the inscriptions upon them are of the right scale to have occupied this place. But it happens that the Cathedral was completed in the year 512 A.D.,⁴⁴² while the inscription in question is dated 488. It is not impossible that the later date records the actual completion of the church after several years of work on it, for it is a very large church and may have been begun twenty-five years before, especially since Julianos, the Bishop of Boṣrā, under whom the completion was effected, was for some time in exile as the result of difficulties with the Emperor Anastasius growing out of the Eutychian heresy. The Greek τρίκονχος (*triconchos*) does not occur in these church inscriptions; indeed, there are no churches in Syria of the tri-lobed plan, although there are rooms in Syrian palaces which have this form.

The only minor accessories of a church that are epigraphically mentioned are the *thronos* of the Syriac inscription of the basilica at Zebed,⁴⁴³ and [ψ]αλιδιον) or tomb, of *Kyrios the builder* at Ḳaṣr il-Benât.⁴⁴⁴ The former was undoubtedly the throne of the bishop, which occupied the middle of the semicircular curve of the apse. The latter must have been a tomb (or grave) within the church, for, although the inscription is not perfectly preserved, it would be impossible to render the part of it in which we are now interested

in any other way than (*his*) *tomb* (*is*) *in* (*the*) *apse*. The word ψαλῖς of which ψαλιδιον is a diminutive form, appears in another inscription,⁴⁴⁵ where it means a rock-hewn grave under an arched arcosolium. Ψαλιδιον however, might mean merely a grave hewn in the solid rock into which the lower parts of the east end of this church were cut. The fall of the half dome of the apse, and the débris lying in the apse, prevented a satisfactory examination of the place. Why a builder was buried in such an important place in the church is explained by the fact that Kyrios was probably a presbyter, as well as a builder. We know from an inscription at Bābiskā,⁴⁴⁶ which is in the neighbourhood of Ḳaṣr il-Benât, that a builder, named Markianos Kyris, was also a presbyter. I believe that this was the same person as the Kyrios of the Ḳaṣr il-Benât inscription (see page 54). It would go without saying that ordinary persons were interred in the crypts of the small burial chapels that exist on the outskirts of many of the ruined towns of Syria. It has also been noted in the other chapters that large stone sarcophagi were found in one of the side chambers of several churches in the North, as at Kalôtā, Brād and Dêr Sim'ân; it is highly probable that these were the coffins of ecclesiastical personages of high rank, or of persons in whose memory the churches were erected. The sarcophagi, however, lend no support to a theory that the churches were common burial places, for they are too few and far between.

Lost Churches:

It is significant that, out of the 29 churches referred to in the inscriptions cited above, only 8 are still to be found in the ruins; and this is only a small part of the inscriptions, which might be quoted, implying the former existence of churches. It does not seem unreasonable to assume that the churches which are to be distinguished in the ruins and which have been published, represent hardly more than one quarter of the number that were to be counted in the same regions at the end of the sixth century. The destruction of churches has been particularly prevalent in Southern Syria where the sites of ancient towns in the plains have always been inhabited, and those in the hills have recently been occupied by the Druses. A few of the missing churches recorded in inscriptions of the South are as follows: one at Shaḳḳā dated 323 A.D.,⁴⁴⁷ a martyrion of Saint Theodore at Shaḳḳā dated 371,⁴⁴⁸ a church at il-Hit dated 354,⁴⁴⁹ a great church at Busr il-Ḥariri dated 517,⁴⁵⁰ a chapel of Saint Elias at

⁴⁴¹ P. III, 560 f.

⁴⁴² P. III, 557.

⁴⁴³ A. IV, 22.

⁴⁴⁴ A. III, 76.

⁴⁴⁵ P. III, 1152.

⁴⁴⁶ P. III, 1095.

⁴⁴⁷ Wadd. 2158, which speaks of the oikos of Saint George and other martyrs.

⁴⁴⁸ Wadd. 2159.

⁴⁴⁹ Wadd. 2124. The inscription, which is in a cartouche and reads *built and raised Holy Sergios*, might refer to a statue, instead of to a church or chapel, as M. Waddington thought.

⁴⁵⁰ Wadd. 2477.

Sâleh dated 547,⁴⁵¹ a church at Shehbā dated 552,⁴⁵² the chapel of Saint Elias at Nedjrân dated 563,⁴⁵³ a large church dedicated to Saint John at Harrân and dated 568,⁴⁵⁴ a church at Sâleh dated 566—574,⁴⁵⁵ the church of Saint George at Nâhiteh dated 623,⁴⁵⁶ the church of Saint Sergios at Dêr il-Kâḏī,⁴⁵⁷ a chapel at Diyâtheh,⁴⁵⁸ a martyrion at Shaḡra,⁴⁵⁹ and another at Umm iz-Zētûn,⁴⁶⁰ The city of Shaḡkā had at least four religious buildings, which may have been churches: the so-called "oikos of Saint George" and the martyrion of Saint Theodore, which are dated, a naos erected under a bishop and deacons, which was probably a church of about the same period,⁴⁶¹ and the "oikos of the Theotokos", which was perhaps a church of the sixth century.⁴⁶²

In Northeastern Syria only parts of the country were occupied by the Moslems in the Middle Ages, and only a few sites are inhabited today; yet there are two inscriptions in the inhabited town of Selemîyeh alone which tell us of churches which have perished: one⁴⁶³ was apparently a large church, possibly dedicated to the Mother-of-God and dated 604 A.D., and the other⁴⁶⁴ was a church, or chapel, of Saint Sergios within a monastery built in the name of the Holy Trinity. Northern Syria has now, and for centuries has had, fewer inhabitants, so that the number of missing churches is smaller in proportion than in the South. Nevertheless there are few, or no, remains of churches in the ruins that are inhabited, and many of the ruins near large settlements have been despoiled of their ancient churches.

Dedications:

It will have been observed from some of the inscriptions quoted above that many of the churches in Syria are known to have been dedicated to, or built in the name of, various saints. It is probable that all the churches were so dedicated. Twenty-one of the churches published in this volume have inscriptions which associate the names of saints or archangels with the churches, even if they do not always prove a dedication, and a much larger number of inscriptions, that are

now no longer on the buildings, indicate that there were many more.⁴⁶⁵

The number of saints commemorated in this way was large and varied, if one may judge by the inscriptions that have been copied. Yet the number of inscriptions that begin *There is one God and His Christ and the Holy Spirit* or simply *One God*, whether a saint is mentioned or not, would suggest that the churches, even when a saint was mentioned in the inscription, was often built in the name of, rather than dedicated to, the particular saint; and there is a great variety of wordings in this respect. A martyrion is almost always called the martyrion of a particular saint. Some of the inscriptions are only ejaculations, — short prayers for help or blessing —, to one saint or another, such as *Holy Sergios, help us!* Others express the fulfillment of a vow to such and such a saint. Due to the limitations and conventions of inscription carving many words were intentionally omitted and left to be supplied by the reader, and often the name of a saint appears in the genitive case at the end of an inscription which names the three persons of the Trinity in the nominative.⁴⁶⁶ Two or three of the inscriptions quoted below were not found in the ruins of the churches, but upon boundary stones marking the limits of the asylum allotted to a church, or upon a tower, or other structure.

Aside from the large number of inscriptions that begin with the words: *In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, there are several which show that churches were dedicated to the Holy Trinity, as at Dâr Kîṭā by a Syriac inscription,⁴⁶⁷ at Selemîyeh,⁴⁶⁸ and il-Anderîn.⁴⁶⁹ The Mother-of-God, Θεοτόκος, occurs in a number of possible dedications from all parts of Syria, but especially in inscriptions from the Northeastern division where this cult seems to have had particular strength. In Northern Syria, at Shêkh Slēmân,⁴⁷⁰ a church described on page 56, is the inscription *Holy Mary, Mother-of-God, help Sergios, the builder*. In Northeastern Syria there are no less than three inscriptions from buildings which imply dedications to the Blessed Virgin under the attribute

⁴⁵¹ P. III, 728.

⁴⁵² A. III, 403.

⁴⁵³ Wadd. 2431.

⁴⁵⁴ Wadd. 2464.

⁴⁵⁵ Wadd. 2261.

⁴⁵⁶ Wadd. 2412 m.

⁴⁵⁷ Wadd. 2412.

⁴⁵⁸ Wadd. 2436.

⁴⁵⁹ Wadd. 2510.

⁴⁶⁰ Wadd. 2548.

⁴⁶¹ Wadd. 2160.

⁴⁶² Wadd. 2160 a. In both cases the inscriptions are undated, and the suggested dates were supplied by Professor Prentice.

⁴⁶³ A. III, 287.

⁴⁶⁴ A. III, 300.

⁴⁶⁵ This question of the dedication of Syrian churches to specific saints is often a delicate problem of interpretation. At times it is difficult to distinguish clearly between an actual dedication and work done under the protection of a saint, or the fulfillment of a vow to some holy person, or merely a supplication for aid. Professor Prentice, who was Professor Butler's colleague, friend and companion on the Syrian expeditions, feels that Professor Butler rather freely assumed in some cases the dedicatory intention of the inscriptions. This is probably true, but we are not certain that all the Syrian churches were formally dedicated to a saint at the time of erection, and are not sure that any one of these different epigraphical methods of naming a saint may not in the end have permanently associated the saint with the church. Therefore, I have not raised the question with every dedication that Professor Butler cites, first, because he chose to think of his Syrian churches by their possible names, and, second, for fear we might kill the truth by too great caution.

⁴⁶⁶ A. III, 61.

⁴⁶⁷ A. IV, 13. Also a tower at Dâr Kîṭā was dedicated in 551 A.D. to the Holy Trinity (A. III, 60).

⁴⁶⁸ A. III, 300.

⁴⁶⁹ P. III, 930.

⁴⁷⁰ P. III, 1212.

Mother-of-God.⁴⁷¹ and one under the simple title of Holy Mary. Not one of these buildings is in situ. There is also an inscription from some lost building at Shaḡḡā,⁴⁷² that speaks of it as *the house of Theotokos*.

At Fa'lûl⁴⁷³ in Northeastern Syria there is a remarkable ruined church with a Greek inscription which shows that it was sacred to the Archangels, and another inscription to the Archangel Gabriel. The former is dated 526. Not far away, at il-Burdj,⁴⁷⁴ is an inscription of the same year which mentions Michael the Archangel, and at il-Anderîn⁴⁷⁵ one of a pair of twin churches was probably dedicated simply to the Archangel. Perhaps one of the churches was Michael's and the other Gabriel's. We know from Procopius⁴⁷⁶ that Justinian erected a church to Saint Michael at Antioch. There is no dedicatory inscription of the Archangels in Northern Syria, but at Umm idj-Djimâl in Southern Syria is a tower bearing the names Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Ouriel.⁴⁷⁷

Saint Stephen "the holy Proto-martyr" is represented in a church and asylum of Justinian's time at Djūwānīyeh,⁴⁷⁸ and in the "Cathedral" of Kerrātīn.⁴⁷⁹ Saint John the Baptist is not represented even in the inscriptions upon baptisteries. The Holy Apostles are mentioned in the inscriptions of fallen arches in the nave of a great church of the time of Theodosius the Great at I'djāz in Northeastern Syria.⁴⁸⁰ The church is described on page 40. The only individual member of the original twelve apostles, and the only one of the evangelists, to be remembered in the dedicatory inscriptions of Syria thus far known is Saint John. I have referred already to the lost church of this saint which Waddington saw at Ḥarrân. It was dated in the year 568. Saint Paul is commemorated in a fine church at Dâr Ḳitā,⁴⁸¹ where his name is joined with that of Moses; I presume that one was taken as the Apostle to the Gentiles and the other as the great Lawgiver of the Jews. The church was built in fulfillment of a vow to Paul and Moses in the year 418. It is described on page 51.

The most favored saint among the Syrian Christians was their own Sergios, martyred about the beginning of the fourth century, to whom churches were dedicated about half a century after his martyrdom, and after whom a city was named within a hundred years of his death. There are no less than a dozen easily found inscriptions from churches that were dedicated

to Saint Sergios; three of them he shared with Saint Bacchos, and one with Saint Bacchos and Saint Leontios. There are two churches of Saint Sergios in Northern Syria, one at Dâr Ḳitā⁴⁸² dated 537, and the other at Babisḡā⁴⁸³ dated 610. They are described on pages 136 and 141 respectively. In Northeastern Syria there were four: one at Zebed,⁴⁸⁴ i. e. a martyrion dated 512 and described on page 158, one at Sele-mīyeh,⁴⁸⁵ one at Nawā⁴⁸⁶ dated 468 and 477, the last two having perished, and the church at Reṣâfah,⁴⁸⁷ which in Christian times was called Sergiopolis in his honor. In Southern Syria there were two very early churches dedicated to Saint Sergios, — that at Shaḡḡā dated 323 A.D., and that at il-Hît dated 354, but neither of them is in existence. There was also the great church of Busr il-Ḥarīrī dedicated to this saint and dated 517. To the martyrs Sergios and Bacchos were dedicated the church of the convent at Umm is-Surab, dated 489 and described on page 85; the convent church of Dêr in-Naṣrânî described on page 91, and the lost church of Ghaṣm dated 593.⁴⁸⁸ To Saints Sergios, Bacchos and Leontios was dedicated the great Cathedral of Boṣrā⁴⁸⁹ in the year 512. No church was dedicated to Saint Bacchos alone, so far as the inscriptions show; but there was once a church of Saint Leontios at Dūr⁴⁹⁰ dated 565 A.D.

Second in importance and popularity among the Syrians was Saint George, the Syrian martyr of the persecutions under Diocletian. Saint George, who was put to death in Palestine, was called the *Megalomartyr* by the Greeks. He is still greatly revered by the Christians who have identified him with the Moslem Saint il-Khiḡr. There are at least six inscriptions, all of them in the South, which belonged to churches of Saint George: they are a lost church at Shaḡḡā, the date of which is rendered as 323,⁴⁹¹ the fine domed church at Zor'ah dated 515,⁴⁹² which is described on page 122 and is the best preserved of all the Syrian churches, an inscription seen by Waddington on the doorway of a little chapel at Sawit il-Khiḡr⁴⁹³ still venerated by the Arabs, two inscriptions of churches that have disappeared, one at 'Amrah,⁴⁹⁴ and the other at Nâhiteh⁴⁹⁵ with the date 623, and that of the convent at Sameh,⁴⁹⁶ dated 624/5 and described on page 89, which calls upon the *Lord, God of St. George*, for help.

After Saint Sergios and Saint George comes Saint

⁴⁷¹ A. III, 287, 350, and P. III, 860, 1024.

⁴⁷⁵ P. III, 920, 921.

⁴⁷⁹ P. III, 988. Professor Prentice is uncertain whether the

⁴⁸⁰ P. III, 1006.

⁴⁸⁵ A. III, 300.

⁴⁸⁹ P. III, 557.

⁴⁹⁴ Wadd. 2092

⁴⁸¹ A. III, 57.

⁴⁸⁶ P. III, 834.

⁴⁹⁰ Wadd. 2412 p.

⁴⁹⁵ Wadd. 2412 m.

⁴⁷² Wadd. 2160 a.

⁴⁷⁶ *De Aed.* II, 10.

⁴⁸² A. III, 61.

⁴⁸⁷ Procopius, *De Aed.* II, 9.

⁴⁹¹ A. III, p. 296.

⁴⁹⁶ P. III, 24, 25.

⁴⁷³ P. III, 1050, 1052.

⁴⁷⁷ P. III, 245—248.

⁴⁸³ A. III, 71.

⁴⁹² A. III, 437 a.

⁴⁷⁴ P. III, 1058.

⁴⁷⁸ A. III, 29.

⁴⁸⁴ A. III, 336 a.

⁴⁸⁸ P. III, 619.

⁴⁹³ Wadd. 1981.

Theodore who was put to death with Saint Maurice and other martyrs at Apamea in Northern Syria during the reign of Maximianus. This saint is represented by inscriptions in all three of our divisions of Syria: by one at Kefr Antîn⁴⁹⁷ in the North, dated 523, by another from Church No. 7 at il-Anderîn⁴⁹⁸ in the Northeast, and by a third at Shaḡkā,⁴⁹⁹ dated 371, from one of the lost churches of that town. Saint Elias, in whose early popularity some authorities believe they detect a survival of sun worship, was commemorated in three inscriptions, all from Southern churches that are no longer in existence, one at Sâleh⁵⁰⁰ dated 547, one at Nedjrân⁵⁰¹ dated 563, and one at Diyâtheh.⁵⁰² A fourth inscription, dated 512, from a church that Waddington saw at Zor'ah,⁵⁰³ names *Elias the Prophet*. Doubtless the two are identical. Saint Kerykos, a holy martyr, is mentioned on a boundary stone at Selemîyeh.⁵⁰⁴

Saint Kosmas and Damianos, the two Syrian physicians always mentioned together, who were so highly venerated in Rome and other parts of the western world, were apparently less popular in the country they had left behind them. A boundary stone at Ḥamā⁵⁰⁵ and an unpublished Syriac inscription at Kefr Antîn in Northern Syria are among the few written monuments to them in these regions. Saints Domninos and Theophilos⁵⁰⁶ are perhaps named on a church lintel at Ḥerâkeh in Northeastern Syria, and Saint Longinus, the Centurion, is mentioned in an inscription dated 526 at il-Burdj⁵⁰⁷ in the same region, while the names of a few less well known, and probably local, saints appear in other inscriptions. Saint Phokas was patron of a large and beautiful church at Bāṣūfân where he is mentioned in an unpublished Syriac inscription of the year 491. Inos, a martyr, is mentioned in an inscription in Būsân in the South, and Saint "Acheos" (perhaps Zacchaïos) in an inscription dated 504 at Kefr Nabō⁵⁰⁸ in the North.

So far as we know, Saint Simeon was not honored by the erection of other churches than the great one about his column at Qal'at Sim'ân. His name, however, does appear in a number of ejaculatory graffiti, *Oh Simeon help us*, scratched by pilgrims upon walls along the routes of their pilgrimages.

Architects, Contractors, Craftsmen:

More personal and intimate information is to be had, perhaps, from those inscriptions which mention

the names of architects and builders. But, in this connexion, the expressions used are so numerous, and apparently so loosely applied, that it is by no means easy, in many cases, to distinguish between the architect or contractor, on the one hand, and the owner or giver, on the other. This is of course true in our own language. We often say so-and-so "built" a house, whether we mean he designed, or ordered to be built, or superintended the construction of the building, never intending to convey the idea that he built it with his own hands. Just so in the inscriptions of Syria; we often find various phrases and forms of verbs meaning to build employed when the owner is obviously the subject, as in the expression (*he*) *built and founded*, i. e. caused to be built and gave the money for, or *builder and founder*. In one phrase he is *buyer and builder*, meaning the buyer of the land; and in some inscriptions the verb *to make* is used. But if we take the substantives, which are used more or less as titles after the names, we shall find it easier to distinguish the architect from the one for whom, and at whose expense, the building was erected. More than one title of this kind, however, occurs in the inscriptions and it is impossible to tell whether the different titles signify different functions, or whether, within limits, the functions of all were similar, or combined. For example, the word τέκτων,⁵¹⁰ as well as ἀρχιτέκτων,⁵¹¹ seems commonly to signify *architect*, i. e. the designer of a building: τεχνίτης apparently had the same significance, and is a common word, used chiefly in the North. On the other hand, οἰκοδόμος, which is a common title in inscriptions of the South though comparatively rare in the North, in many instances seems to mean *builder* in our sense of the word. It is probable that there was no great difference in the function of designer and builder, for, although some of the churches undoubtedly required an artist to draw the plan and a general overseer to carry out the design, one must assume that in most cases the architect was also the builder or contractor, and may have been himself an artisan as well.

A rare word, used as a title in this way, is τηκτόνης,⁵¹² which may mean either or both, architect or builder, and κτίστης⁵¹³ which seems to be used in the same way. Unusual titles, like μηχανικός⁵¹⁴ and ἐργοδότης,⁵¹⁵ accepting the uncertain restoration of the second word, probably mean *engineer* and *overseer* respectively. There are other words, however, which are used to indicate

⁴⁹⁷ P. III, 1202.

⁵⁰² Wadd. 2436.

⁵⁰⁷ P. III, 1058.

⁵¹¹ P. III, 1201, 7978. Wadd. 2471.

⁵¹² P. III, 1143. This title is probably a mistake, like τέκτονος in Wadd. 2150, for τέκτων.

⁵¹³ P. III, 1074, 1171.

⁴⁹⁸ P. III, 926.

⁵⁰³ Wadd. 2497.

⁵⁰⁸ Wadd. 2249.

⁵¹⁴ A. III, 305.

⁴⁹⁹ Wadd. 2159.

⁵⁰⁴ A. III, 298.

⁵⁰⁹ P. III, 1173.

⁵¹⁵ A. III, 282.

⁵⁰⁰ P. III, 728.

⁵⁰⁵ A. III, 350.

⁵¹⁰ P. III, 1170, 1212, 1213 (?).

⁵⁰¹ Wadd. 2431.

⁵⁰⁶ P. III, 1033.

artisans, i.e. workmen; for example, λιθοξόος,⁵¹⁶ λαοξόος,⁵¹⁷ λατόμος,⁵¹⁸ λιθοτόμος⁵¹⁹ and λαοτύπος⁵²⁰ all seem to mean *mason*, or one who dresses and polishes stone.

Few of the inscriptions from which these words are taken were found upon churches, and the names of architects who can be definitely assigned to extant churches are limited to Kyros, the architect of the church of Paul and Moses at Dâr Kîta, Kyrios of the church at Kaşr il-Benât, Markianos Kyris of Bâbiskâ

and Kyrillas of Ksêdjbeh. All these may have been the same person, for Kyrios and Kyris are doubtless variant forms, Kyrillas a diminutive of the same name, the towns are in the same immediate neighbourhood, the inscriptions are all dated between 390 and 415 A.D., and the architectural details of all the buildings are strikingly similar.

The names of other Syrian architects, builders, engineers and craftsmen are given in the list which follows:

REFERENCE	NAME	TITLE	PLACE	DATE A.D.
<i>P.</i> III, 1201.	Mariades	ἀρχιτέκτων	Bâtûtā (N)	363 (or 563)
<i>P.</i> III, 1201.	Saakōnas	"	Bâtûtā (N)	363
Wadd. 2471.	Herakleides	"	Busr il-Ḥarîrî (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 797 ⁸ .	Herakleides, son of Alaphallos	"	Sûr (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 1170.	Gaios	τέκτων	Kefr Nabō (N)	224
<i>P.</i> III, 1170.	Seleukos	"	Kefr Nabō (N)	224
<i>P.</i> III, 1170.	Dometianos	"	Kefr Nabō (N)	224
<i>P.</i> III, 1143.	Petros, son of Antoninos	"	Fidreh (N)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 1212.	Sergios	"	Shêkh Slēmân (N)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 1213.	Sergis	" (?)	Shêkh Slēmân (N)	—
Wadd. 2150.	Maiōr, son of Zobaidos	"	Shaḡḡā (S)	—
<i>A.</i> III, 35 = Wadd. 2682.	Damas	τεχνίτης	Kōkanâyā (N)	378
<i>A.</i> III, 278, 279.	Sekoundinos	"	Mughr Ramdân (N)	386
<i>A.</i> III, 66 = <i>P.</i> III, 1094.	Eusebis	"	Bâbiskâ (N)	389
<i>P.</i> III, 1095, 1096 = <i>A.</i> III, 67	Markianos Kyris	"	Bâbiskâ (N)	390 & 401
<i>A.</i> III, 76.	Kyrios	"	Kaşr il-Benât (N)	—
<i>A.</i> III, 57 = <i>P.</i> III, 1076.	Kyros	"	Dâr Kîta (N)	418
<i>A.</i> III, 73.	Kyrillas	"	Ksêdjbeh (N)	414—415
<i>A.</i> III, 283.	Malchos	"	Rîḡā (N)	421—22 (?)
<i>P.</i> III, 1146.	Maris	"	Refâdeh (N)	427 (?)
<i>A.</i> III, 37 = Wadd. 2683.	Domnos	"	Kōkanâyā (N)	431
<i>P.</i> III, 1080.	Symones	"	Dâr Kîta (N)	452
<i>P.</i> III, 1141.	Iakobos	"	Fidreh (N)	453 (?)
<i>A.</i> III, 3.	Bargos	"	Bettir (N)	475
<i>A.</i> III, 3.	Kyrkos (?)	"	Bettir (N)	475
<i>P.</i> III, 1176, 1177 (also 1142, 1174 & 1190).	Kosmas	"	Brâd (N)	491 & 496
<i>P.</i> III, 1177.	Symeōnes	"	Brâd (N)	496
<i>P.</i> III, 1120.	Eusebis	"	Zerzîtā (N)	500
<i>P.</i> III, 1120.	Iōannes Mar[....]	" (?)	Zerzîtā (N)	500
<i>P.</i> III, 1089.	Eusebios ⁵²¹	"	Dâr Kîta (N)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 1161.	Pallad(ios) Abraam	"	Kal'at Sim'ân (N)	—
<i>A.</i> III, 100, 101.	Neikator, son of Meniskos	οικοδόμος	Djebel Shêkh Berekât (N)	86
Wadd. 1984 ^d .	Bassos	"	Uyûn (S)	309
Wadd. 2043 = <i>P.</i> III, 685.	Somenos	"	Auwaş, now at Ormân (S)	324

⁵¹⁶ *P.* III, 871, 888, 988.

⁵¹⁷ Wadd. 2413 n.

⁵¹⁸ *A.* III, 277, 332.

⁵¹⁹ *A.* III, 336.

⁵²⁰ Wadd. 2474.

⁵²¹ Probably the same as Eusebis of the Bâbiskâ inscription, dated 389 A.D.

REFERENCE	NAME	TITLE	PLACE	DATE A.D.
Wadd. 1999 = <i>P.</i> III, 156-7.	Pakatos	οἰκοδόμος	Şalkhad (S)	345
Wadd. 1999	Thaimos	"	Şalkhad (S)	345
Wadd. 1999	Authos	"	Şalkhad (S)	345
Wadd. 1999	Asterios	"	Şalkhad (S)	345
Wadd. 2037.	Chaiamos	"	Imtân (S)	350
<i>P.</i> III, 177 = Wadd. 2053.	Oranios (i. e. Ouranios) or Soranios	"	Il-Meshkûk (S)	350
<i>P.</i> III, 197.	Romanos	"	il-Ghâriyeh (S)	380
<i>P.</i> III, 197.	Authos	"	il-Ghâriyeh (S)	380
<i>P.</i> III, 197.	Boëthos	"	il-Ghâriyeh (S)	380
<i>P.</i> III, 159.	Rabbos of Borechtha Sabaôn	"	Şalkhad (S)	403
Wadd. 2022 ^a .	Gadouos (son of?) Temeros	"	Harise (S)	419
<i>P.</i> III, 713 = Wadd. 2026.	Soemos (?)	" (?)	Melaḥ iṣ-Şarrâr (S)	466
Wadd. 2235.	Gadouos	"	Mushennef (S)	492
Wadd. 2235.	Zosimos	"	Mushennef (S)	492
<i>P.</i> III, 1190.	Leōnidas	" (?)	Burdj il-Ḳâs (N)	493
Wadd. 2299.	Magnos Dionysieus	"	Mdjêmir (S)	516
Wadd. 2070 f.	Kassios	"	Ṭurrah (S)	—
Wadd. 2091.	Iōannes of Mōsemera	"	°Amrah (S)	—
Wadd. 1984.	Nameros	"	°Uyûn (S)	—
<i>A.</i> III, 386 = Wadd. 2168.	Alexandros, son of Edeos	"	Ṭafḥā (S)	—
<i>A.</i> III, 123 = <i>P.</i> III, 1159 = Wadd. 2693.	Symeōnes	" (?)	Dêr Sim°ân (N)	—
Wadd. 2021 ^b .	Saios, son of Thaimos	"	°Ormân (S)	—
Wadd. 2053 f.	Onenos	"	Dêr il-Maiyâs (N)	—
Wadd. 2421.	Sōpatros.	"	Rîmet il-Luḥf (S)	—
Wadd. 2465.	Oulpios.	"	Ḥarrân (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 738.	Addos, son of Taroudos	"	Bûsân (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 783 ¹ .	Samethos, son of Salamos	"	Djdiyeh (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 783 ⁵ .	Abibos	" (?)	Djdiyeh (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 786.	Themos	"	Şmêd (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 786 ¹ .	Mogeeros Tooranes	"	Şmêd (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 786 ¹ .	Mogeeros, son of Antōninos Dabanes	"	Şmêd (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 787 ⁸ .	Tonzikos	"	Mdjêdil (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 787 ⁸ .	Gautos	" (?)	Mdjêdil (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 787 ¹⁰ .	Aumos	"	Mdjêdil (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 800 ⁷ .	Abchoros	"	Dâmit il-°Alyā (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 800 ⁷ .	Abgaros	"	Dâmit il-°Alyā (S)	—
<i>P.</i> III, 800 ⁷ .	Chasetos, son of Ouabelos	"	Dâmit il-°Alyā (S)	—
<i>A.</i> III, 305-6.	Isidōros	μηχανικός	Ḳinnesrîn (NE)	550
<i>P.</i> III, 988.	Iōannes	λιθοξόος	Kerrâtîn (NE)	510
<i>P.</i> III, 871.	Iōannes (ἀπὸ Κώ(μης) Ολβανον)	"	Halbân (NE)	543
<i>P.</i> III, 871.	Symeōnes (ἀπὸ Κώ(μης) Ολβανον)	"	Halbân (NE)	543
<i>P.</i> III, 888.	Antōninos	"	Il-Mishrifeh (N)	—

REFERENCE	NAME	TITLE	PLATE	DATE A.D.
Wadd. 2413 ⁿ .	Gabnes	λαοξόος	il-Ghawâghib	—
A. III, 336.	Marōnas	λιθοτόμος	Zebed (NE)	337
A. III, 277.	(H)annai	λατόμος	near Rîhā (N)	—
A. III, 332.	—	"	Mu'allak (NE)	606
Wadd. 2474.	—	λαοτύπος	Busr il-Ḥarîrî (S)	—
P. III, 1170.	Antōnios	λευκουργός	Kefr Nabō (N)	224
P. III, 1170.	Sōpatros	"	Kefr Nabō (N)	224
A. III, 282: cf. 305.	Gorgonios	ἐργοδότης	Rîhā (N)	422

FROM THE SYRIAC INSCRIPTIONS

A. IV, Syr. 15.	Yōhannā, son of Zakkai	Built and finished the architect	Bābiskā (N)	547
A. IV, Syr. 8.	Yōhannān		Dêhes (N)	—
A. IV, Syr. 7	Yōhannān, son of Marōnā	the architect(?)	Khirbit Ḥasan (N)	—
A. IV, Syr. 18.	Theodore	the architect(?)	Ḳaṣr il-Benât (N)	—
A. IV, Syr. 19.	Kaukab(?) — ʿĀlemā.	the builder	Mektebeh (N)	—
A. IV, Syr. 22.	Mōranas (i.e. Marōnas?)	(the stone-cutter)	Zebed (NE)	—

In looking over the list, one will notice that these titles follow local fashions and, to a certain extent, period fashions, for the names of very few architects are given after the close of the fifth century. It is interesting to observe that certain names occur together as the constructors of a building: Mariades and Saakōnas (ἀρχιτέκτονες) of Batûtā, Bargis and Kyrkos (τεχνῖται) of Bettir, and Authos, Boēthos and Romanos (διοδόμοι) of il-Ghāriyeh are some of the "firm names" of these Syrian architects and contractors. Any one of these men may have been an architect or builder of churches. The name Palladios occurs inconspicuously upon one of the minor buildings of the monastery at Ḳal'at Sim'ân, but we are not informed if this man, whose famous namesake of a thousand years later built so many Venetian churches, was himself the architect of the great church of Saint Simeon. Alexandros may well have been the architect of the church at Ṭafhā which is described on page 22, for his inscription was found near the church. Isidoros, the engineer, was perhaps the nephew of the famous Isidoros of Miletos, the architect of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, for, according to Procopius, he was working on fortresses in Syria and may have been the architect of the domed church of Ḳaṣr Ibn Wardân, which is a foreign product. These architects were often something more than builders. M. Kyris was a presbyter; Petros, the

builder of Fidreh, was a deacon, as was probably Eusebis of Bābiskā; Sabatios, a deacon of Kfellusîn,⁵²² contributed of his own toil in the erection of a tower, which may imply that he was an architect or a labourer.

Builders of Churches:

The question "who built the churches of Syria?" using the phrase in the sense, *at whose expense were they erected?* is partly answered by the church inscriptions. Some perhaps were built as memorials, others in fulfillment of vows made by individuals, groups or families. The church at Sāleh,⁵²³ which was restored by provision of the municipality under the care of Georgios and Tios between 566 and 574, is no longer to be seen. The earliest church at Umm idj-Djimāl was perhaps erected in 344 A.D.⁵²⁴ by the presbyter Agathos as a memorial to his son Julianos. Kyrios, the architect, built the beautiful church of the convent of Ḳaṣr il-Benât⁵²⁵ in fulfillment of a vow, presumably his own vow. The presbyter Diodoros built the great church at Dâr Ḳitā⁵²⁶ as a vow to Paul and Moses in 418; the two chapels (martyria) at ʿÔdjeh⁵²⁷ were erected in fulfillment of vows; Church No. 3 at il-Anderîn⁵²⁸ was built *For a vow of Euklos, Sophia and their children*; one of the inscriptions upon the twin churches of the Archangels in the same place reads *Thine own, from thine own, to Thee I bring, O*

⁵²² P. III, 1105.

⁵²³ Wadd 2261.

⁵²⁴ P. III, 262. This inscription, as applied to the church at Umm idj-Djimāl, is questioned on page 250, note 424.

⁵²⁵ A. III, 76.

⁵²⁶ P. III, 1076.

⁵²⁷ P. III, 961—2.

⁵²⁸ P. III, 925.

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God, through the Archangel, for the remission of the sins of Dometios, son of Mareas, and the other For the vow and for the salvation of Dometios, son of Mareas, and of Synklētikē, his wife.⁵²⁰

Names of Rulers:

The names of political rulers do not appear often in the inscriptions of churches. Wherever they do occur, they are useful in determining the dates of the inscriptions. Emperors are rarely mentioned. An inscription upon the apse arch of the Church of the Holy Apostles at I'djāz⁵³⁰ bears an inscription asking the prayers of the Apostles *for the victory of our lords, Emperor Flavius Theodosius, and Arcadius Caesar*, which is an adaptation of the old Roman formula. This dates the church between 383 and 395. The Emperor Justinian I is named on a boundary stone of the asylum of Saint Stephen at Djūwānīyeh,⁵³¹ and Justin II in the inscription on a baptistery at Dār Kīṭā,⁵³² dated 566 A.D. The name of Flavius Bonus, *comes and dux*, appears at il-Kefr⁵³³ in a church inscription of the year 392.

Names of Prelates:

The Patriarch and Archbishop Domninos is named, after the Emperor Justinian, in the inscription from Djūwānīyeh already quoted, and the Patriarch Anastasios in that from Dār Kīṭā. Julianos, Archbishop of Boṣrā, figures in the Cathedral inscription of that city.⁵³⁴ Bishop Tiberinos is named at Shaḳḳā in 323⁵³⁵ and was probably the bishop of that city (Zaccaeā or Saccaeā) in the Ḥaurān; Bishop Antiochos is named at Fāfirtīn in Northern Syria, in 372 A.D.⁵³⁶ The sixth century bishops named are Ioannes at Bashmishli in 536,⁵³⁷ Basilios at Shehbā in 522,⁵³⁸ and the bishop-coadjutor Sergios at Shêkh 'Alī Kāsūn in 565 A.D.⁵³⁹ The archimandrite Eulogios was abbot of the monastery at il-Hīt in 354.⁵⁴⁰

Presbyters or Priests:

The presbyters of the Syrian inscriptions were the priests of the churches. The names of a good many of these priests have been given above in other connexions. There follows below a partial list of the presbyters taken from dated inscriptions of the churches:

NAME	PLACE	DATE A.D.
Agathos	Ummidj-Djimāl(S)	344
Dōeros	il-Hīt (Eitha) (S)	354
Petros, son of Theoteknos, the periodeutes ⁵⁴¹	Zerzītā (N)	375
M. Kyris	Bābisḳā (N)	390
Libanios	Abū Ḥanīyeh (NE)	406
Rouphinianos	Kharāb Shêkh Berekāt (N)	407(?)
Bizzos	Ksêdjbeh (N)	414
Diadōros	Dār Kīṭā (N)	418
Hesychios	Ḥerākeh (NE)	418
Maras	Zerzītā (N)	423
Euphranis	I'djāz (NE)	429
Salemos	I'djāz (NE)	429
Moseos	Bābisḳā (N)	480
Symeones	Bāḳirḥa (N)	491-501
Symeones	Zerzītā (N)	500
Anneos, son of Boukeos	Zebed (NE)	512
Sergis	Zebed (NE)	512
Ioannes, the periodeutes ⁵⁴¹	Zebed (NE)	512
Ioannes	Dār Kīṭā (N)	567
Sergios	Dār Kīṭā (N)	567
Danos	Dār Kīṭā (N)	567
Bachchos	Dār Kīṭā (N)	567
Rhamlys	Dār Kīṭā (N)	567
Sergios	Shêkh Slēmān (N)	602
Silvanos	Shêkh 'Alī Kāsūn (NE)	605

The presbyters are sometimes given the title "Most devout". Symeon, Ioannes and Sergios are the only names repeated in the list. The name of Maras of Zerzītā, appearing in an inscription of 423, is interesting because a priest of this name is mentioned in the *Life of St. Simeon*. Maras, or Maris, was the priest who received Saint Simeon into the monastery of Telneshē. This was about 412 A.D. and by 423 Maras may very well have been made presbyter of Zerzītā, a nearby town. Other names of presbyters are Marōnios, Symeōnes, Zaros and Kosmas.⁵⁴²

Deacons:

A few names of deacons mentioned in dated inscriptions, taken from a larger number, are as follows:

⁵²⁹ P. III, 920, 922.

⁵³³ P. III, 670.

⁵³⁷ A. III, 46.

⁵⁴¹ "A *periodeutes* was a visiting presbyter, whose rank was intermediate between that of ordinary presbyters and the bishop". (Prentice. P. III, 1118).

⁵³⁰ P. III, 1006.

⁵³⁴ P. III, 557.

⁵³⁸ A. III, 403.

⁵³¹ A. III, 29.

⁵³⁵ Wadd. 2158.

⁵³⁹ P. III, 811.

⁵³² A. III, 62.

⁵³⁶ P. III, 1199.

⁵⁴⁰ Wadd. 2124.

⁵⁴² P. II, 815. Symeōnes and Kosmas are partly restored names, and it is not certain, according to Professor Prentice, that more than one of the four was a presbyter.

NAME	PLACE	DATE A.D.
Zēnon, archdeacon	Amra (S)	—
Elias	il-Hīt (S)	354
Sabinianos	il-Hīt (S)	354
Mikalos	Bākirhā (N)	384
Eusebis	Bābiskā (N)	401
Kyriakos (?)	Abū Ḥanīyeh (NE)	406
Nonnos	Zerzītā (N)	423
Sabatios	Kfellusîn (N)	492 or 522
Satorninos Azizos	Zebed (NE)	512
Azizos, son of Sergios	Zebed (NE)	512
Azizos, son of Mara Barka	Zebed (NE)	512

A deaconesss, Zar^cörtā by name, is mentioned on the balustrade inscription of the basilica at Zebed, which dates from the fourth century,⁵⁴³ and Leontis, archiparthenos (chief-of-virgins) is named in the inscription of the Martyrion of Saint Sergios in the same place, dated 512. Leontis was no doubt an abbess of this, or some neighbouring, convent.

One cannot fail to notice how small a proportion of the names in the lists given above are of Greek or Roman origin, and how few of them are “saint names” or “fête names” that became common throughout Christendom in later centuries. This is perhaps explained by the fact that most of the inscriptions are “Christian” and that most of the Christians of these regions in these centuries were simple folk of Aramaic stock.

⁵⁴³ A. IV, Syr. 22—24.

CHAPTER XI.

ORIGINS AND INFLUENCES.

THE origins of an architectural style, if by the term we mean the immediate sources, are seldom far to seek, for the originators of any particular type of architecture, even if they were immigrants, generally adopted as a basis for their art the building forms of their predecessors on the spot, using them well or ill, and altering them to suit any new requirements that may have arisen. The influences that may be traced in a style, on the other hand, are more subtle and, consequently, more elusive. They may be brought to bear in a variety of ways and may have travelled far. In the present chapter we shall consider briefly the origins of the style expressed in the early churches of Syria and Arabia, together with some of the influences which seem to have been brought to bear upon it. The discussion of the out-flowing influences will have to be passed over with a few words, for it is too large a subject to be included in a volume the chief object of which is to present the churches of Syria as they are and as they were, and is a subject which has already been extensively discussed by competent authorities.

More than one modern writer on the history of Early Christian architecture has said that the character of the architecture of Christian Syria was the resultant of three forces: Hellenism, indigenous originality and the influence of the Mesopotamian-Persian Orient. This is true, but the activity and effect of each of these three forces were not the same. The operation of the first two, the Hellenism and indigenous originality, is visible in a vast majority of the churches described in the foregoing chapters; the third is manifest in a very few of them. Two different causes have resulted in the overstatement of the so-called Oriental influence upon Syrian architecture. The first has been merely a misconception in the minds of some writers, based upon the peculiar character of a few isolated buildings published in the first works on the architecture of Syria and in one or two more recent books which describe individual churches. For example, it is sometimes stated that the Mesopotamian-Persian influence is shown in the architecture of Christian Syria by its fondness for the vaulted roof. Such a statement is based upon the two domed churches of Zor'ah and Boşrā, published by de Vogüé, and the church at Ẓaṣr Ibn Wardān, described by Strzygowski in *Klein-*

asien. As a matter of fact, when these churches have been mentioned, there is very little more to be said on the subject of vaulted churches in Syria, except, perhaps, in Northeastern Syria where there is some evidence in the light brick, which was used in this region, and in a few buildings of central plan, that the tradition of vaulting had some vogue in the church architecture. The domes of Zor'ah and Boşrā, on the other hand, are the only Christian specimens of their kind in Southern Syria, although domes and other forms of vaulting had been commonly used by the Romans in the great public buildings of this region. The church of Ẓaṣr Ibn Wardān, in Northeastern Syria, is unique and a foreign importation. In Northern Syria the dome was not used by the architects of the Christian churches, and we have only tombs, such as the tomb of Bizzos with its beautiful cut-stone dome, to show that the domical roof was not unknown, although it was obviously disregarded as a form for religious and monumental architecture. The fact that Constantine built a magnificent church at Antioch with a great dome which when it was injured by the earthquake of 526, was rebuilt in wood, would suggest that this Constantinian use of the dome, as well as the earlier and more common Roman use of the dome in this region, was opposed by the indigenous traditions of Syria and, even as late as the sixth century, was not accepted by the church builders. Certainly the octagon of the baptistery at Kal'at Sīmān was covered by a wooden roof, and the German scholars, publishing the sixth century churches at Reşâfah in Northeastern Syria, believe that these too were covered with pyramidal roofs of wood.

Still it is in Northeastern Syria, which extended to the Euphrates, that we find a natural meeting place for the various influences which so many writers choose to attribute to Syria as a whole. Here, in the mixed technique of stone and brick, the dominant Hellenism of Northern Syria and the transverse system of Southern Syria mingled with the domical and vaulting methods which were, perhaps, imported from the Persian sphere of influence. In general, however, the Christian architects of Syria avoided the dome and the vault, except in so far as these appear in the half dome of the apse and its prolongation in the form of a short tunnel vault; and for these vaulting forms

the Syrian architects were not obliged to look beyond their own borders in search of models. In Southern Syria the roof of flat stone slabs was used whenever possible, and in the North the wooden roof reigned supreme. It is not in the least surprising that students of *La Syrie Centrale* should have taken the two remarkable monuments mentioned above as examples of a class, for only more thorough exploration has shown that Ẓaṣr Ibn Wardân is purely exotic. Still the two famous domed churches of the Ḥaurân may be said to show the influence of Mesopotamia, for the form and structure of Zor'ah, which is so well preserved, finds precedent nowhere in the Hellenistic world. Such domes and vaults as existed in the mud-brick building regions of Northeastern Syria may have had the same Eastern origin; but all of these taken together form a very small part of the architecture of Christian Syria.

The other cause leading to a misconception of Syrian architecture and an overemphasis of Oriental influence in its formation, is less easily explained. For the last fifteen years there has been an increasing effort to push the origins and inspiration of Christian art further and further east. In so doing writers have come to belittle and ignore the importance of Hellenistic culture in the formation of Christian forms of expression. This eastward trek, while it opened up new lands and brought fresh and even inventive pioneer points-of-view to the remaking of our ideas of Christian art, stimulating into action the complacency of Romanists and Classicists, has brought into sharp contrast the contending claims of the two great forces which formed East Christian culture. Writers on East Christian art have thus drifted into warring camps with scant benefit to scholarship, which should have enthusiasms but avoid antipathies. The truth, as is always the case when one deals with questions of racial and cultural development, is never simple and one-sided. The Orientalizing theory, in its effort to push the origin of all that is virile, beautiful, ingenious and original in the formation of Christian architecture back into Northern Mesopotamia, Persia and Armenia, has unconsciously slighted the Hellenistic aspect of the large mass of Christian Syrian architecture for the more problematic evidence of Oriental influence to be found in Amida, Edessa and Nisibis.

Hellenism was the mainspring of the church architecture of Syria. One has only to turn the preceding pages and to observe the illustrations to be convinced of this. The wells of Aegean culture had been flowing in Syria for six hundred years when church building began. The Arab Nabataeans of the South had been among the first to adopt Hellenistic architecture, and

then to make free with it at will. They were the first builders, so far as we know, to place the arch directly upon the column by arcuating the entablature above the middle intercolumniation of a temple portico, as they did during the first century B. C. in the temple of Dushara at Si^c. They placed a moulded relieving arch over their wider portals, and set a gable above the arch; they introduced motives of their own into the details of Hellenistic ornament, even inserting heads and grotesques into the foliate capitals. In later centuries, under Roman rule, the Hellenized Arabs and other Aramaeans, while conforming more closely to Greek canons in the outward appearance of their buildings, departed farther and farther from Greek precedent in matters of plan and construction, which features they adapted to their own preconceived notions of building. Temples, like those of Hebrân and Slêm, which appear on the exterior as purely Classical buildings, distyle-in-antis, in the interior show transverse arches and roofs of stone, and large apses between side chambers. These native introductions into the staid forms of Classical architecture, which are evidence of the "indigenous originality" that was later conspicuous in the churches, were not confined to the architecture of the smaller provincial towns, but soon found their way to the great building centres of Syria. The arcuated entablature, which was certainly used in Ba'albek and Djerash, is still to be seen in Damascus, and was undoubtedly a feature of the architecture of Antioch.

It has been shown, in a previous chapter, that a large proportion of the church plans of Southern Syria found their antecedents in the native secular and religious buildings of the period immediately antedating the rise of Christian power at the beginning of the fourth century, and it is significant that the features which were taken over from Pagan architecture by the Christian builders were those of native introduction, rather than of pure Hellenistic origin; for there is comparatively little in the plans, construction and ornament of the Southern churches that can be said to have had its beginnings in pure Hellenistic art.

In the North, on the contrary, Hellenism manifests itself in every building. The most striking single feature, of the hundred details or more that have a Classic origin, is the predominant pediment. The Syrian architect was never content with the plain gable end for his buildings; he invariably drew the cornice straight across the wall, connecting the ends of the raking cornice, and thereby reproducing the pedimental form of the most ancient of Greek temples. This fondness for the pediment is often carried to the ends of the aisle roofs where again and again

the straight cornice appears below the sloping one to form half pediments on either side, thereby anticipating Palladio's churches of the Classic revival by more than a thousand years. The orders, too, not only in the North but also in the South as well, stand as constant reminders of Aegean art. The three great orders are all represented, in forms more or less debased, it is true, but bearing witness none the less to the presence of Aegean culture. On the exterior of churches the Greek columns carry straight epistyles in true Classic fashion; in the interiors they generally support arches, but even here a straight, moulded band, like an architrave, is drawn above the arches, as Brunelleschi felt bound to do when he had placed a row of arches upon columns. The decorative treatment of the opening of the apse was also taken over directly from Hellenistic architecture in Syrian hands, for the apsidal piers with their foliate caps, and the moulded archivolt, are nothing more than an enlargement of some of the niches at Ba'albek and Palmyra. Indeed, there is a building in the latter place with an apsis which might easily be mistaken for the sanctuary of one of these churches, but for the three small niches which ornament its curved wall.⁵⁴⁴ The archivolt mouldings which are returned above the caps of the piers are only imitations of the arcuated entablature, and the archivolt which springs from columns and is also returned at its springing, like that at Bāsufān, represents an even more exact reproduction of the middle intercolumniation of a temple front. The same may be said of arches, like those of the octagon of Qal'at Sim'an, which spring from columns set against the reveals of piers and have complete entablatures which are broken and returned at the springing, and carried from one arch to the other. Hellenistic precedents both for placing a pediment directly above an arch, and for carrying an arch up into a pediment, as we find in the narthex of Qal'at Sim'an and in a number of distyle porches, are found in Pagan buildings at Palmyra, Ba'albek, Shaḡḡā and elsewhere. The Hellenistic origin of many of the minor details has been pointed out in the chapter on ornament; but we may recall the use of columns applied to the exterior of walls — e.g. to a curved wall at Qalb Lauzeh and to a straight wall at Dêr Sêtā —, of pilasters and moulded string courses, of the denticulated cornice, and the cornice with modillions, all of which had their origin in the architecture of the Greeks.

The triumph of Christianity at first produced something of a reaction in favour of the native elements in the art of Syria and Arabia, a reaction from which

Arabia never recovered. In the North this movement gave wider scope to native originality, and introduced into the architecture a host of charming motives, more Oriental than Classic, which unquestionably add much to the beauty of the Syrian style. This infusion of native taste is expressed chiefly in the ornament. The trapezoidal door-cap decorated with horizontal bands of incised pattern, and the decorative use of ornamental and symbolic discs are, perhaps, the most salient features that represent the native genius, though the employment of mouldings as festoons and their spiral terminations may be considered as equally characteristic of the reaction. But Hellenism had such a strong hold upon the intellectual classes in all the region dominated by Antioch that after a century, — indeed as soon as Christianity had recovered from a temporary and probably instinctive reaction against the forms of Paganism, — we find church architecture turning for inspiration to the temples of the banished gods.

Yet, in spite of this hold of Hellenism, the rich and abundant sculptural decoration of Syrian architecture is almost wholly without any figurative and representational forms, and the ruins of the Christian churches disclose no fragments of free standing sculpture. Their absence tends to undermine the prevalent theory that the Semitic or Syrian contribution to Christian art was confined to a marked predilection for narrative and even dramatic forms of expression. The theory itself seems to have been based upon the very uncertain attribution of the Cathedra of Maximianus and other ivories of its class to Antioch, and upon the marginal illuminations of such Christian manuscripts as the Rabula Gospels. If the instinct of the Semitic mind was for a representational art, it is curious that the Syrian architectural sculpture, which was so largely based upon Hellenistic models, where representational forms were used in the decoration, should so noticeably fail to reveal this instinct in the carving of the existing buildings. The "realism of Syro-Hellenistic Christian Art", lacking evidence in the architectural decoration, was probably a tradition imported from Alexandria and Asia Minor into the large cities like Antioch, just as the style and iconography of Syrian illuminated manuscripts would suggest.

In looking beyond the borders of Syria, it is not in architecture, but in the minor arts, that we find any convincing proofs of outside influences which definitely and clearly shaped the art of Christian Syria. As we look to the south, to Alexandria and the subsequent art of the Copts for possible influence, we find that there was undoubtedly a relation, and in

⁵⁴⁴ Wood, *Palmyra*, Pl. LII.

some cases a similarity, between the Hellenistic Christian centres of Antioch and Alexandria, on the one hand, and between the monastic centres of Syria and Upper Egypt on the other. In the minor arts of ivory carving, goldsmith work and book illustration, the art of the Antioch craftsmen rests almost wholly upon suppositional and, in some cases, controvertible attributions. In these arts, as in the formation of the Antioch text of the Gospels, there was strong influence from Alexandria and Asia Minor. In architecture, on the other hand, the situation was reversed. Where Alexandria and Egypt had the more authoritative tradition in the minor arts, Syria had the richer and more permanent stone architecture that grew directly out of the indigenous style of the region. Alexandrian architecture is purely hypothetical, and Coptic architecture is so confused by poor construction and constant rebuilding after the Arab conquest that there is no evidence that Egypt, early or late, had any appreciable influence upon the Christian architecture of Syria. Such similarities as exist, as the use of the prothesis and the diaconicon, passed from Syria into Egypt, and, in the case of the flanking chambers, became a common feature of the early churches of North Africa.

When we look to Asia Minor, especially to Cilicia and Lycaonia, we find distinct resemblances; but the problem is more complex. A large proportion of the buildings in these regions, — and they are principally churches —, are later than the churches of Syria. In fact there are few remains of pre-Christian architecture of any kind. The later churches seem to bear a stronger resemblance to the Syrian buildings than can be found in the earlier ones, none of which are definitely dated; so that one is led to believe that the influence was radiating from Syria toward the North. One is almost tempted to take the position that some of the later churches in Cilicia were actually built by Syrians who had migrated northward after the Persian invasion. Asia Minor, particularly those regions which lay nearest to Syria, and in the period under discussion, was not a country constituted to dominate in the field of art, certainly not to radiate influences of sufficient strength to counteract those emanating from a great centre of civilization like Antioch. She could produce a Gregory to match Syria's Chrysostom, but in this period she never produced a church to match Saint Simeon's shrine, or a dozen other provincial churches in Northern Syria.

It is perhaps more to be wondered at that so few traces of the influence of the capital of Christendom are visible in the church architecture of Syria; but this situation is less astonishing when we pause to consider two vital points in the circumstances; first, that Con-

stantinople was the civil, not the ecclesiastical, head of Syria, and, second, that the architectural aims of Constantinople and of Syria were almost diametrically opposed. On the first point we may say that Antioch, ever proud of the Apostolic origin of her see, was jealous of any interference from the political capital. Her patriarchs were often opposed to the patriarchs of Constantinople; the emperors alone had power to control them, and often failed in their attempt to do so. On the second, it is patent that the aim of the architects of the capital was to develop a school of architecture in which the dome was the principal form and brick the main material, while the aim of the Syrian architects, when once defined, was to perpetuate the stone tradition of Hellenistic art. The influence of Byzantium is seen in Syria at only a few places, as at Kaşr Ibn Wardân, where the architecture is exotic, unless there were churches of Justinian's building in Antioch which reproduced the structural methods of the capital. The principles of construction in both Syria and Arabia, are wholly different from those which characterized Byzantine architecture. The dome, as we have seen, is rare; the cross vault is rare. The imposts of arches set upon columns, instead of being bulky, are always slender, and the dossier, or impost block, which is so characteristic of Byzantine architecture, appears only in the exotic buildings mentioned above, and in even such cases they are unadorned. It is true that the colouristic treatment of carved ornament, so characteristic of Byzantine art, appears on a number of Syrian monuments. Colouristic carving, however, had been in vogue in Syria while Byzantium was a small provincial town. One has only to examine the ceiling of the pteroma at Ba'albek and some of the foliate friezes of temples built in the late second and early third century, such as the Tychaion at iṣ-Şanamên, to be convinced that Hellenistic art, in its later manifestations, and in alien hands, was beginning to replace plastic ornament with decoration of a more pictorial and patternlike technique. Some authorities will have it that the colouristic technique originated in Syria, and was carried thence to Anatolia, Byzantium and the West. In any event, the spirit and feeling of this kind of work in Syria are not like those of the Byzantine centres; the foliate forms cling more closely to Classical tradition, the acanthus is less "thorny", its surfaces are more delicately modelled, and the capitals, on which the ornament occurs, are invariably concave, instead of convex, in their profiles.

Turning to the East, to Mesopotamia and Persia, whence we might expect to find streams flowing westward, in view of the important economic relations between the Syrians and the Sassanian and Edessene

kingdoms, we discover little tangible evidence of Oriental influence from this quarter, beside the domed construction which has been discussed above. Concerning the Oriental elements in the ornament of Syria it is impossible to say whether they were due to direct Mesopotamo-Persian influence or largely to indigenous originality, since it is quite probable that these two expressions mean one and the same thing; that is, that the native expressions of taste in matters of ornament were somewhat the same in both countries. For example, the early use of colouristic carving and the tendency to reduce representational form to flat and somewhat abstracted pattern were not necessarily the result in Syria of Eastern influence, although undoubtedly intensified, as tendencies, by contact with the East. Non-representational pattern and so-called colouristic carving are too often considered to be an infallible mark of Oriental influence, when, in fact, they are both partially the result of material and technique, and partially the expression of a naïve state of mind which is not rationally interested in objective and plastic reality. It is true that the East had the technique and attitude of mind which tended to make abstracted pattern. On the other hand, the non-representational character of Syrian sculpture, the common use of the drill for carving, and the custom in certain parts of Syria of covering the walls with stucco, which would have suggested stamped and incised ornament, imply that the conditions of popular taste and technique were such as to have produced the ornament without any contact with Mesopotamia.

As has been said above, the subject of the influence of Christian architecture of Syria and Arabia upon styles of Christian architecture in other countries, and upon the art of Islam, is too great to be taken up in the present volume. Much has been written already upon this topic, and a volume more could be added without difficulty. The use of the prothesis and diaconicon, while not adopted by the Western Church, became general in the Eastern Church, spread to North Africa, and to the early Visigothic architecture of Spain, appearing finally in the Early Christian church at Silchester, England.⁵⁴⁵

Syrian art must have played a distinct part during the early centuries of Christianity in building up the culture and art of Western Europe, for, at the time when Syrian architecture was at its height, France and Italy were thronged with Syrians — both merchants and ecclesiastics — who held prominent positions in the economic and religious life of the West. The inter-

course between Syria and Gaul, while amply attested by chronicles and inscriptions,⁵⁴⁶ is dramatically recorded by two grave stones, one from Genay in France, and the other from Imtân (Motha) in Syria. The Gallic epitaph, bilingual and written in the third century A.D., tells of a Syrian from Kanatha (Ḳanawât in the Ḥaurân), "who left his native country to come into this land to trade", and had at both Genay and Lyon booths, "filled with Aquitaine merchandise". "Irresistible destiny has made him find death on a foreign soil".⁵⁴⁷ The Syrian analogy, written in Greek on a gravestone of 342 A.D., records the death of a native of Gaul, a lady of Rotomagus (Rouen), who died, "alone, far from her native land".⁵⁴⁸

While we do not read in the ecclesiastic accounts and inscriptions of Syrian workmen, stone-cutters and architects, following the Syrian churchmen to these lands of the West, largely because their craft and its work were not considered important enough to be recorded, still we know that the itinerant builder was a common figure in the trade. Syrian workmen must have helped to restore the reviving art of architecture in Europe. If there was constant intercourse between Syria and France and Italy until the end of the sixth century, with the result that the more advanced Syrian culture was carried into Western Europe by Greek and Syrian churchmen and traders, there must have been still greater dissemination of Syrian art after the end of the sixth century, when Syria was overrun by Islam and the country stripped of its wealth and prosperity. At that time her craftsmen must have sought new fields for their arts. What part Syria played in the subsequent development of Romanesque architecture, it is dangerous to say. While one wonders what influence the Syrian towered façade may have had upon the Romanesque façade with its two flanking towers and feels there must have been some relation between the colonnaded corbel-tables, which surrounded the exterior of the apse of Ḳal'at Si'mân, and the thin shafts applied to the exteriors of Romanesque apses, it is wise to stop before the subject escapes the original intention of this book. Syrian architecture, in addition to being one of the earliest expressions in stone of the new faith, and a lasting record, even in its ruins, of the zeal and beauty of that faith, is also an important factor in the general growth of Christian architecture. What its influence was, can best be determined after more is known of its buildings, and this volume, it is hoped, may help to supply that knowledge.

⁵⁴⁵ Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, II, p. 11. Fig. 6.

⁵⁴⁶ L. Bréhier; *Les Colonies d'orientaux en Occident*, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XII, (1903), pp. 1—39.

⁵⁴⁷ Allmer et Dissard, *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de France*, 1865, pp. 1—19.

⁵⁴⁸ Wadd. 2036.

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- Page 3, Christian *instead of* "Cristian".
" 17, Umm idj-Djimâl *instead of* "Umm idj-Dimâl".
" 19, note 15, (see note 424, page 250) *instead of* "(see note 1)".
" 24, Kanawât *instead of* "Kanawât".
" 26, Ill. 22, Serdjillâ *instead of* "Serdjilla".
" 40, Ill. 39, 383—395 A.D. *instead of* "429/30 A.D."
" 42, Lubbên *instead of* "Luddên".
" 76, μνημεῖον *instead of* «μνημεῖον».
" 158, 504/5 A.D. *instead of* „505/5 A.D.”
" 187, BASILICAS *instead of* "BASILICUS".
" 203, il-Mismiyyeh *instead of* "il-Mismiyyeh".
" 243, Chancels and Parapets *instead of* "Chansels".

